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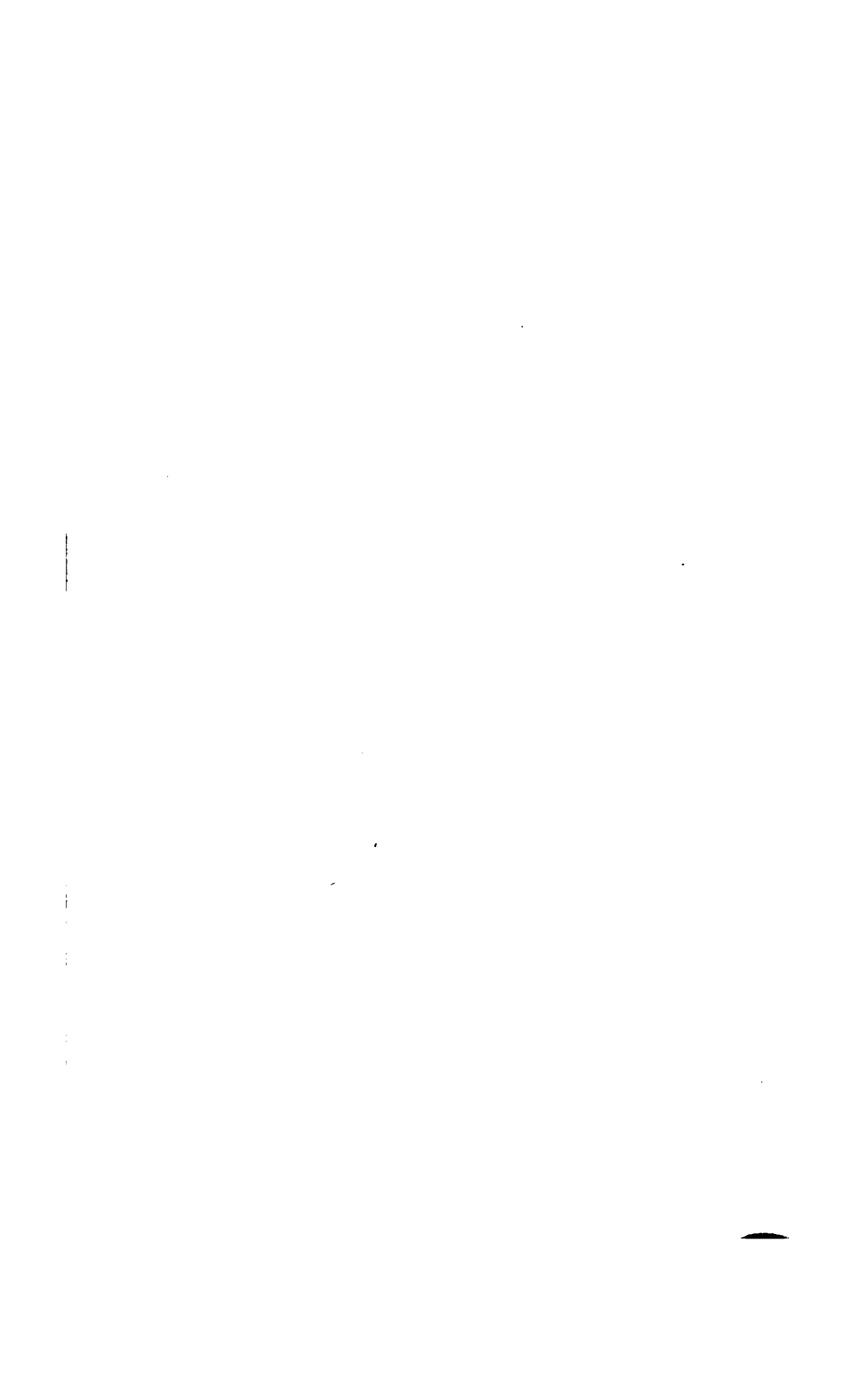
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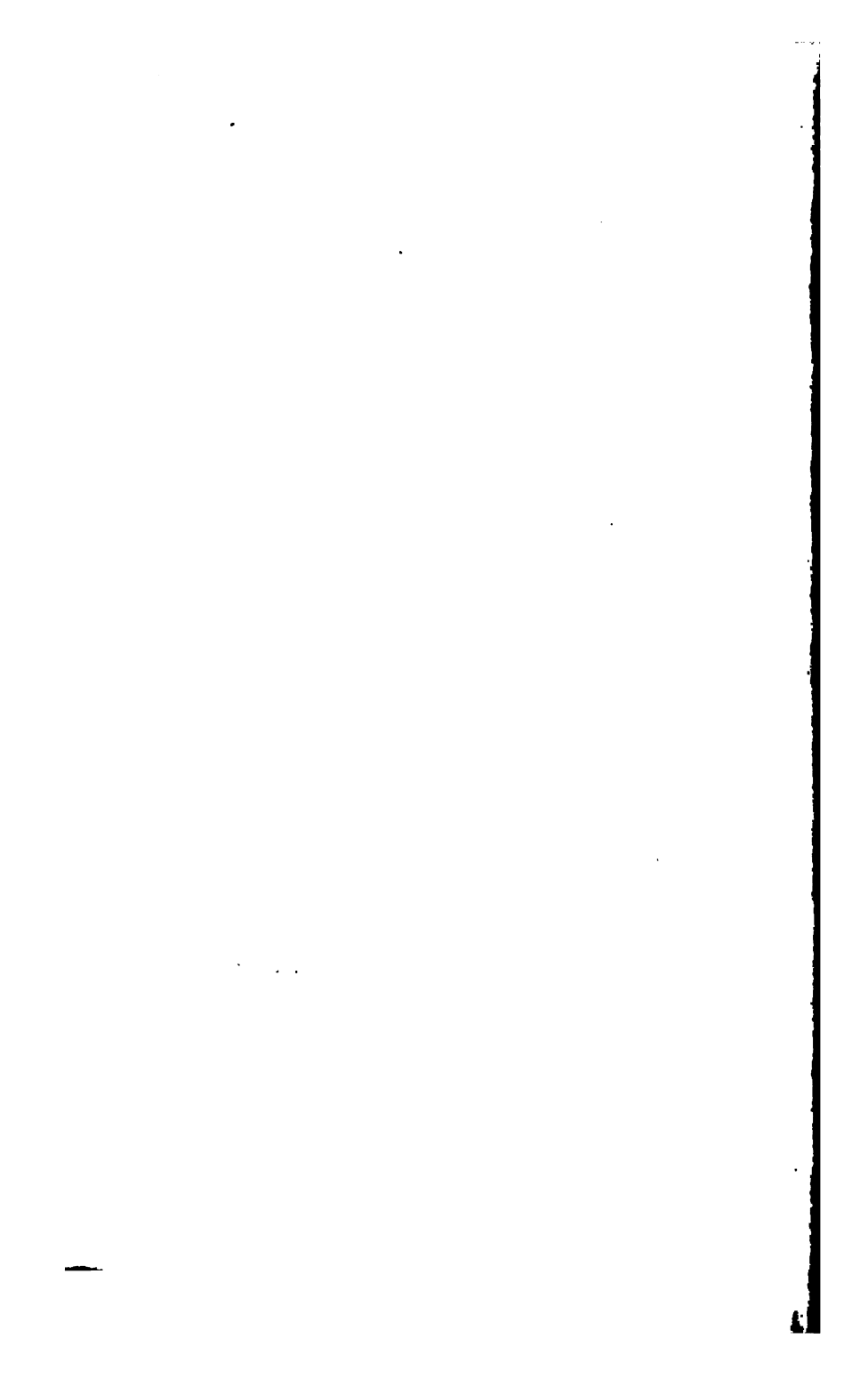
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1570

NORWAY:
THE ROAD AND THE FELL.

BY

CHARLES ELTON,
LATE FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.



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JOHN HENRY AND JAMES PARKER.

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“ Farväl i fiällar
Der äran bor,
I blåa sjöar
Jeg känt så väl,
I skär och öar
Farväl! Farväl!

“ Farewell ye fells
Where virtues dwell ;
Ye blue lakes
I know so well,
Ye skerries and isles,
Farewell ! farewell !”

SWEDISH SONG.

1870

1870

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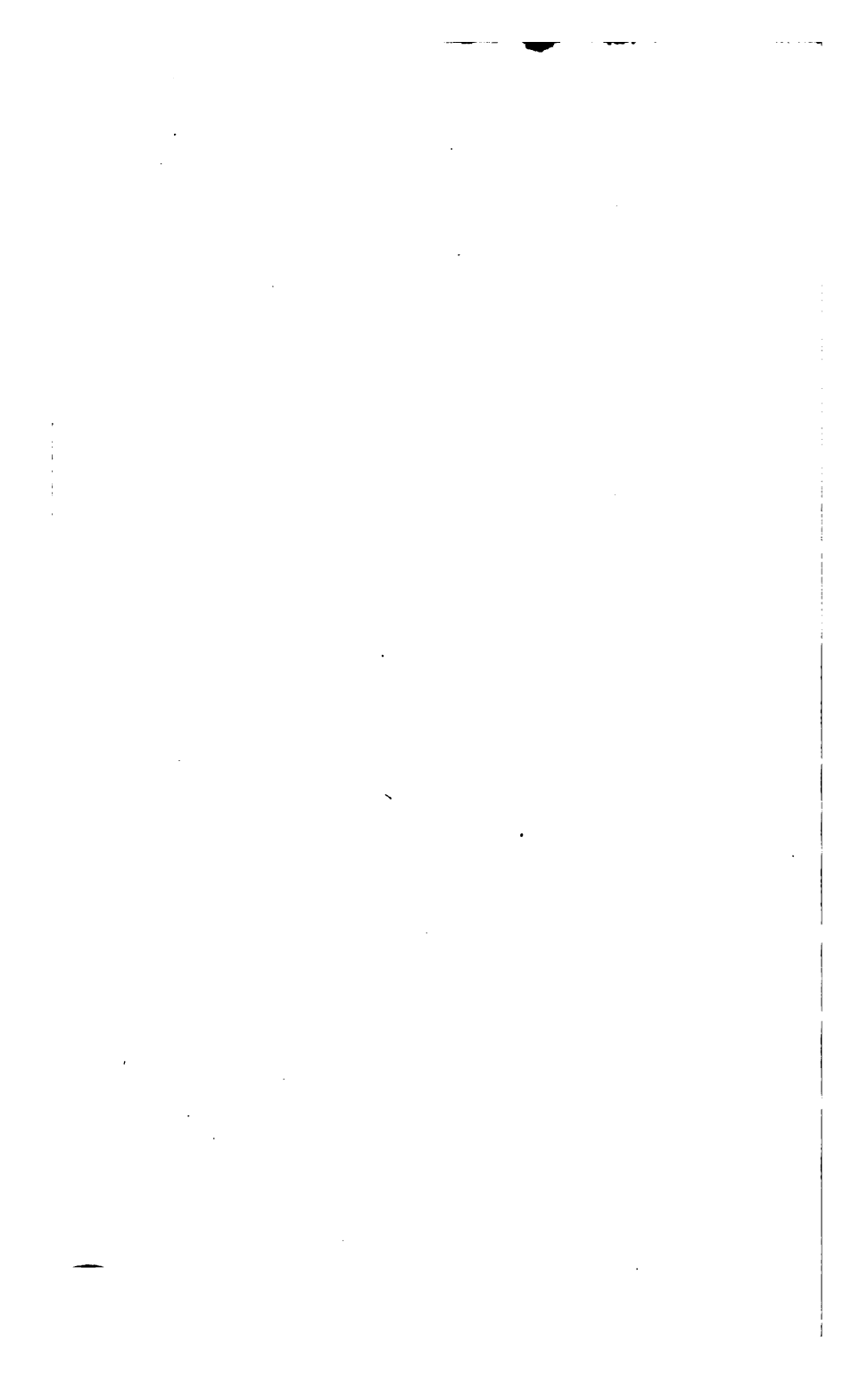
THE following work is meant in some degree to accomplish a double purpose; to amuse and assist those who travel in Central Norway, by practical advice and information about places through which they too often pass without asking questions, and on the other hand to give a sketch of the habits and opinions of the Norwegians to those who have not visited their country. The modern anecdotes and descriptions of sport and scenery were gathered by the writer during the summers of 1862-3; the older legends and fragments of history rest partly on the authority of the writer's Norwegian friends, partly on that of native standard works. To the writer, as to all who care to know what Norway was in other times, the "Natural History" of Bishop Pontoppidan has been of great assistance; in the occasional

references to matters of history and philology, he has relied, among other works, on the *Gothicæ Runæ* of Resenius, and the splendid edition of the Sagas published in 6 vols., folio, by the Danish Government.

It will be found that due acknowledgment has been made to other authors, in places where a reference to their books has been required.

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NORWAY.

CHAPTER I.

ROUTES FROM ENGLAND—CHRISTIANSAND—CHRISTIANIA.

FOR some time sportsmen in annually increasing numbers have been flocking to the land of grouse, salmon, and reindeer, but it is only of late that the fashion has spread of spending the summer and autumn months there in whole families, or with ladies in the party, so that Englishwomen are not rarer in Norway now than were Cantabs and Oxonians seven years ago!

There are many reasons for the continuance of such a good custom. Norway is not more than three days' sail from England, and is as yet unspoiled by Cockneys, though in time it may become as much a suburb of London as Spa or Interlachen. Already in some parts the English are looked upon as a sort of superior beings, a rich caste who may supply the place of an aristocracy in the country regions. The towns-people are naturally slower to

imagine a superiority, which after all does not exist, and occasionally profess to be scandalized at the ragged condition of sportsmen returning from the "uplandish parts." On the whole we are both liked and indulged by our Norsk cousins, whose language (as far as I am aware) contains no conventional gibes answering to "mad Englander" and *cochon d'Anglais*, no sneer at *porter-bière* and *rosbif*.

They have their faults of course, which are all old-fashioned in our eyes; that is, they belong to a state of society when "Tom Jones" was a true mirror of English life, when gentlemen got fuddled over their daily and nightly cards, smoked pipes in the ball-room, and swore like—Norwegians!

There is also an earnest worship of specie-dollars, which to an Englishman appears peddling and sordid, accustomed as we are to worship mammon on a larger scale. But the Norwegians are kind and courteous, and many of the peasants as good gentlemen as I ever met with; they are grateful for any favour, though independent, as beseems citizens of this most democratic kingdom. As their old motto not too proudly says,—

Mod, Troeskab, Tapperhed, og hvod som giver ære,
Den heele Verden kand blant Norske Klipper lære^a.

“Courage and fidelity and all that wins praise
The world may learn on Norway’s mountain ways.”

“Excellent persons they are in the main,” as Emerson wrote^b, “with good sense, steadiness, wise speech, and prompt action;” the only blots on their scutcheon, with which travellers have any right to meddle, being dirt and dilatoriness. To Englishmen this country should possess a peculiar charm, as the mother of so many families, the colonizer of so many counties in England. When the rest of Europe groaned under feudalism, the country districts of Norway were free from the burden of miniature courts and kings. The dalesmen lived in their log-houses, “fishing in the fiord and hunting the deer,” as they live now, and were not disposed to put up with much tyranny from the king whom they had chosen. “If a farmer had so much as a hayfork he stuck it into a King Dag^c.” The farmers were like the Scotch lairds, tenants *in capite* of small freeholds,

^a This is the original inscription on the monument at Kringelen, marking the place where a body of Scotch troops were destroyed by an ambuscade of peasants, A.D. 1612.

^b English Traits, p. 33.

^c Ibid.

which were exempt even from the penalties of treason in a country where estates were fettered by the "Allodial" or "Odal" Law^d. Odal is said by many to be only the word *all-odh*, *allodium*, reversed. Icelandic scholars, however, identify it with *ädal*, 'noble,' i. q. *edel* and *ethel* in the German languages. The chief provision of this *odal-baarns-recht* is identical with the feudal maxim, "Alienatio feudi paterni non valet etiam domini voluntate, nisi agnatis consentientibus." (*Liber Feud.*, quoted by Wright and Hallam.) That it never worked well in Norway was shewn long ago by Bishop Pontoppidan, who writes thus:—"No freehold can be alienated from the heirs, who even in the second or third generation can redeem it, when the *pro tempore* possessor must turn out immediately. When land is sold to a stranger it never fetches its value, because the buyer possesses it with great uncertainty, and does little to improve the ground which can hardly be called his own, according to the poet's words,—

Sic vos non vobis nificatis aves.

Pontopp., vol. ii. 290."

^d This law once prevailed over Europe in various forms, and is identical in principle with the *Retrait lignager* of the feudal law-books, and the English statute *De Donis*, which created entails; it

Those who were odal-born to land were called *hölldr*, an honourable title, which Harald Haarfagre, the first king of all Norway, tried to do away, by making all the bonders swear fealty to him; at his death, however, his sons claimed his lands by odal-right, and revived the title of the freeholders. The same thing happened later in the Orkneys, where the Earl bought up all the udallers' rights. They were restored some time afterwards, and the tenure still exists in those islands.

The time allowed for redemption by the heirs has been reduced by successive enactments to five years; but even in this mitigated form the law is a nuisance to English purchasers of land. Perhaps in time the conservative farmers who govern Norway will abolish altogether these old-world restraints on the brisk circulation of land.

There are several routes to Norway, and it is hard to say which is best. The shortest, no doubt, is from Hull to Bergen, a voyage of three days; but the boats are small and dirty, rather different from the secured the lands of the father to the son, notwithstanding sale or treason committed. The advance of royal power or the spread of commerce abolished it in most countries, but it still lingers in Norway.

fine steamers, "Ganger Rolf" and "Scandinavie," which run between Hull, Christiansand, and Christiania. Perhaps the best way is to go in one of these boats straight to Christiania, unless the tourist knows enough about the country already to make him prefer landing at Christiansand and driving to Christiania, thereby stealing a march on the other passengers, and securing the best carriages from Mr. Bennett and the best room at the hotel. The beauties of the Christiania Fjord have been much exaggerated: no doubt the brown rock islands look very splendid when fired by a Northern sunset, but the effect in general is disappointing, though Murray thinks that the "scenery of this fjord is as lovely as its form and extent are magnificent." To my mind the Bergen Fjord, especially if seen by the summer twilight, is a far more beautiful approach to Norway. Those who land at Christiansand will make every endeavour to flee from its dreadful dulness. Indeed, there is nothing to do except to watch the countless sea-nettles, or "sea trolde," which (as Pliny said of them) "wander about the waves and feed on flesh[†]." The Norsk name is *manetan*, or

[•] *Urtica marina*.

[†] Pliny, Nat. Hist., ix. ch. 45.

mar-nettel, the sea-nettle, and the peasants use them in various ways for poisoning vermin, and as a medicine. Some people have a bucket or two full of these creatures poured down their back as a stimulating bath! Sundfjord is a fashionable place for this sort of bathing. The visitor to Christiansand may be lucky enough to see some of the queerly-clad peasants from Seterdalen, famous for bears and filthy natives, who bring strawberries and bilberries (*blaa-bær*) for sale to Christiansand. It may be as well to remind Englishmen that smoking a pipe without a cover after dark is punishable by a fine of four specie-dollars: a very salutary regulation in a land of wooden towns. The cathedral is perhaps worthy of examination; and a visit may be paid in the course of the morning to the churchyard of Oddenas, which contains some Runic inscriptions; but there is no doubt that the best thing to do on arriving at a Norwegian town is to leave it as soon as possible. These peasants of Seterdalen speak a curious *sprog*, or dialect, much nearer to old Norsk than the Danish of the towns; in fact, they are not able to understand the ordinary phraseology in some cases. I well remember meeting a party of Seter-

dalers when walking with some friends from Christiania, and their disgust at finding that my feeble attempts at Danish were quite as intelligible as their polished phrases. Indeed, the gentlemen were taken for Germans by the rustics.

The most interesting route to those who have leisure for a long journey is from Hamburg to Copenhagen, and thence to Christiania. The treasures of art possessed by the Danes in the Thorwaldsen's Museum, and their magnificent collection of Northern antiquities, would amply employ a long stay in Copenhagen. A flying visit may be paid to Gothenburg, and the falls of Trollhattan, the chief of Swedish lions, and the journey continued in the next half-weekly boat from Denmark. The "Victoria" is the best hotel in Christiania, but the Hotel du Nord is comfortable, and the landlord very obliging. The high price of everything in this town makes a speedy retreat desirable; but a couple of days may be well spent here if escape is impossible.

The gay season in Christiania is the winter, when the upper classes leave their country towns and come to the capital for a month or two of gaiety. From all accounts the sledging parties must be very pleas-

ant, and the fjord is said to be covered with skaters, when too much snow has not fallen early in the winter. It does not generally freeze very far down, but in very cold winters the ice has reached to the sea. A few centuries ago the weather must have been more severe; Sæmund, the author of the *Elder Edda*, says that the frost was so intense that the wild beasts ran across the ice from Norway to Denmark A.D. 1048, which is confirmed in the "Annals of Iceland" by Bishop Gisla Olafsen.

Another historian, Arild. Hvitfeld, a Dane, is quoted in support of the tradition that the Skagerack was completely frozen A. D. 1296, in the reign of Eric VII., so that a vast number of people crossed from Opslo (Christiania) to Jutland on the ice.

In the first place there is a nice walk for ladies to Oscarshald, a house and garden on an isthmus which juts into the fjord. The view of the town and castle over the water is pretty, but a better may be got by driving to the hills behind and looking down on the islands. There is a very respectable museum of antiquities, interesting chiefly to those who have not seen the incomparable collection at

Copenhagen. The Danes, I believe, were clever enough at the dissolution to keep all the curiosities which had been collected in Norway before 1815. The carved calendars are curious; they represent the seasons by signs, e. g. a goose for Martinmas, a pair of gloves for winter, and so on. There are also some *tal-stocker*, or tally-sticks, on which pedigrees were kept with a view to claims on land by the Odal Right. The antiquities are arranged as at Copenhagen, and divided into the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age of two periods, and the Middle Ages.

In the first Age are knives and axes made of flint, or the bones of the animals which lived in the primeval forest on whose skirts the first hunter tribes lived, the aurochs, reindeer, and elk: there are the flint-flakes and stone beads whose artificial nature has been so warmly disputed in England. In times nearer to our own we may pick out as worthy of notice in the farrago of weapons and ornaments some fine filagree-work in silver, a carving of the creation of Eve, and some drinking-horns, especially one ornamented with the figures of a bear and a man fighting. Here also you may study the peculiarities

of the peasants' costumes. On one shelf are the tambourine-like brooches tinkling with silver plates; on another the crowns worn by brides in Leirdal; the *fire*, or brass-decked belt for the *toll-kniv*, gimlet, &c.; the scarlet wedding-belt, with brass and silver *zirater* (ornaments), and many other curiosities of dress. Probably the filagree-brooches from Thelemarken will excite most admiration, "hung with silver-plates, buttons, and rings, such as they wear on their fingers, to which again they hang a parcel of small ones, which look brilliant, and make a ginging noise when they walk." I was interested at seeing the *opsta-gang*, or loom for making the coarse vadmél^s cloth, which will soon be superseded by more modern inventions. "This is a frame in which the yarn hangs down against the wall, with stone weights at the end of the warp to keep it tight, and is done much in the manner of tapestry weaving. Instead of a shuttle made of a reed or cane, they use an instrument in shape like a sabre, which they think preferable. It is made of bone or iron." The vadmél is dyed with a decoction of *lichen islandicus*. It is said that four colours may be extracted from it,

^s Vadmél, from old Norse *vad*, 'a rag.'

viz. pale yellow, rusty red, and two shades of brown. For the deeper browns and blacks the *arbutus uva ursi*, and a fat earth called *sorta*, are used. (Vide Hooker's Tour in Iceland, i. 215.) In the zoological department is a large and valuable collection of marine animals, as good as any in Europe, containing, among other rare fishes, a specimen of a new sort of bream^h, never before found. It came from Hammerfest. The colour is black, but in shape it closely resembles our bream.

Among other things they are very proud of a complete skeleton of the great auk (*alca impennis*), or gair fowl, which appears to be now extinct. The Danes are rich in legs and heads of this bird, which are found in abundance in the refuse-heaps, or *kitchen-middens*ⁱ. I have seen stuffed specimens of the *alca impennis* at Copenhagen and Amsterdam, and there is another in a private collection at Christiansand. They have its eggs both here and in the

^h *Brama Harschii*.

ⁱ As the reader will no doubt recollect, the absence of smaller bones is attributed to the agency of dogs, which at the present day, according to Professor Steenstrup's experiments, "devour those parts of the skeleton which are now missing, and leave just those which are preserved in the old refuse-heaps." Vide Lyell.

fine collection at Amsterdam, but they are rare. The colour is greenish white, the length 6 in. by $3\frac{1}{2}$, not unlike those of the great northern diver (*Colymbus glacialis*), which are often passed off upon unwary collectors at huge prices. In order to pass this latter egg off as that of the great auk, or penguin, a large specimen must have been picked out, and the colour altered. The great northern diver's egg is about four inches long, and of a dark brown olive colour spotted with black. That of the great auk is nearer six than five inches, and is of a dirty white shade, with purple spots clustered at one end. These birds appear to have been the commonest food of the early inhabitants; they abounded even of late years in Iceland, and were seen in the Shetland Isles, but are now extinct, except perhaps in Geir-fugl's ðe, the cliff in Iceland where they were last caught (notwithstanding the terrible surf), or perhaps in Greenland or Behring's Straits, where they have also been lately seen. They appear to have been as stupid as dodos or boobies, and (according to Mr. Kingsley) to owe their extinction to the facility with which sailors could drive them along a board in a waddling crowd from

the rock to the ship's hold. The Norwegians still use the proverb of a tipsy fellow, "He is as drunk as an auk." The collection of the present Norwegian birds and beasts is perfect and well preserved.

I saw some Hitterdal peasants in a most extraordinary costume, gaping at the stuffed bears, and knocking their unaccustomed heads against the plate glass, in a semi-savage way. The costume would be becoming if one could remove the dirt, which they appear to consider its inseparable accident.

But it is time to leave the museum and return to the hotel, after paying a visit to the indefatigable and courteous Mr. Bennett, the head of the "Christiania Carriole Company," for providing English people with any number of carriages on reasonable terms. The terms are really reasonable when one considers that it would otherwise be impossible either to buy carriages in sufficient numbers, or to sell them again on return. Of course the Norwegians do not pay a dollar a-day for a phaeton among themselves, and abuse Mr. Bennett for fixing "such English prices;" but one must pay for the

convenience of getting any sort of carriage at an hour's notice. Mr. Bennett has published an "Annual Handbook," which everyone buys; it is more or less a translation from the Government "Pocket-book for the Road," (*Lomme-reise-route*). He is very ready to give all sorts of information, and to help travellers pleasantly on their way. Those who are doubtful about routes, and want to get to the best scenery in the shortest time, should consult this gentleman, whose experience will suggest those which are likely to suit. A *light* four-wheeled phaeton, with Macintosh moveable hood on a frame, is the best carriage for two; but unless a very light one can be bought or hired, it is better to take carriages. Driving along in a string of these little gigs (which are like Neapolitan *carricole* or *sulkies*), is very good fun, and, after the first shaking on the stones, a comfortable way of going. A single traveller can do his eighty miles a-day in one, but a party must be content to measure their speed by the capacity of the slowest horse, which the farmer generally contrives to put in the van of the procession. Now let us go back to the "Victoria" or "Du Nord," and read the "Times." The cook will serve

up a splendid dinner *à la Norvège*, and send you to bed quite contented with your first instalment of Norway fare. One of their best dishes is a roasted hazel-hen (*hjerpe*), which they eat with red-currant jam. This bird was often mistaken by older writers for the Italian francolin, which it somewhat resembles in plumage. It is, however, a small species of grouse, well known in Germany as the gelinotte. I will only quote one witness to its excellent qualities. "For its white, sound, and tender flesh, and its delicious taste, I prefer it to all kind of fowl I know," says the old historian. "The fowler enticeth it to him by blowing in a pipe, which sound resembleth the voice of its mate. On Kolens Fjeld they are in abundance, and according to Schefferi's account in such vast numbers as cannot be counted." I fear that the supply scarcely reaches the demand for them in our times, even on 'Kolen Fjeld;' they are, however, found in tolerable numbers in the wooded valleys and copses just beneath the plateau of the fjeld, like black-game.

Here also you will make acquaintance with the *molte-bær*, or cloud-berries (*rubus chamæmorus*), which are made into a pleasant acidulous mess with

cream^k. They are highly esteemed by the Norwegians, who have, however, several berries quite as good. The *mölte-bær* are said to be very useful in curing scorbutic affections, the curse of the country; thus Bartholinus, "Confectio et spiritus mororum Norvegicarum omnium vota superat. Mori hujus in profligando scorbuto deprædicatur virtus." The best berries of all are the Alpine strawberries^l and wild raspberries^m, which the children sell by the roadside up the country, a hatfull for a penny or so. Then there are cranberriesⁿ, exported by the fur merchants from Drammen to England; and bilberries^o, which grow all over the fells up to the edge of the glaciers. Out of a long list remaining I will only mention the barberry^p, which is as common here as in Switzerland, and which earns its Norse name, *bjorne-bær*, from the supposed love of them in bears, which are said to trudge long distances in search of these berries. Who would have suspected a Norway bear of a weakness for

^k Some people have derived our beer from *bær*, 'berries,' on the false supposition that the country *øl* is made of *mölte-bær*. Beer is from the Icelandic *bior*, not *bar*, 'a berry.'

^l *Jord-bær*, 'earth-berries.' ^m *Hind-bær*. ⁿ *Krake-bær*.

^o *Blaa* and *Blaak-bær*.

^p *Bjorne-bær*.

barberry *bon-bons*? Yet so it is; and Bruin is supposed to have an equal liking for another piece of confectionary, viz. the stalks of the *angelica*, which grows freely in the upper parts of the valleys. King Olaf's fondness for *angelica* led to a desperate quarrel with his wife, who did not appreciate as it deserved a bundle of it instead of jewels. *Angelica archangelica* is still a favourite dainty with the Norwegian men (and bears). The Icelanders eat it with butter. Perhaps it is of more importance than a discussion on desserts, to consider what store of provisions is necessary for a trip up the country. Preserved meats hermetically sealed are the best sort of food to take, with a few pots of mock-turtle soup, some tea, brandy, and arrowroot. The tea should be brought from England, but the rest can be bought as well in Norway as at Fortnum and Mason's. Messrs. Thorn of Drammen make the best preserved meats, for which they got a prize medal at the last Exhibition.

These goods should be packed in *tiner*, or provision boxes made of birch-wood, prettily ornamented with lines burned in. They are equally handy in a carriage or under the seat of the phaeton. They may be bought at a house near Mr. De Co-

ninck's bric-a-brac shop. No one is likely to leave Christiania for good without investing in a *souvenir* from this polite though high-priced monopolist. Mr. De Coninck buys up the heirlooms of the peasants from Thelemarken, which they sell to raise the passage-money for America. Some of their brooches are really splendid; one may get an old beaker or apostle-spoon on not unreasonable terms; and when I was last there I saw some curious cups for drinking "*was-hael*," hung round with silver bells. There is, however, no doubt that if the traveller is willing to exert himself, and bargain with the peasants in whose houses he stops, he may pick up the same sort of things at a much cheaper rate. The neighbourhood of Bergen is the best for silver cups, Thelemarken and Hallingdal for brooches, studs, and spoons.

But there is really no excuse for thus remaining in Christiania; we have bought the current number of "*Bennett*," and strapped it to Murray; the carriage is stocked (above all things take a good whip, and take care that it is not stolen), and in the morning we leave Boniface bowing at his door, and go clattering and jingling down the road to Drammen.

CHAPTER II.

LIFE AT A FARMHOUSE.

THERE are many places up the country where the people are well pleased to receive the English *en pension*, or as tenants of the whole house on moderate terms. A party which includes ladies will naturally prefer a sequestered settlement by some grand fiord, or under the brow of snow-tipped fells, to wandering up and down the face of Norway.

Aurland, on a branch of the great Sogne Fiord, is one of these places, where excellent accommodation for a family can be got at the Landhandler's house, for about half-a-crown a head *per diem*. Visitors to the more frequented hotels in Romsdal and the Dovre district, will find the expense nearly double what I have mentioned. Aurland is mentioned in King Sverre's Saga as the place where he left his sick soldiers to be attended. "A little while after went the king from Björgvin (Bergen), and but set a few men to keep guard in the castle; and the king went thence up to Vors, (now the parish of Vossevangen, a village once called Vorsastrand,) and so to the Red Fells. (Raudafiallz are the hills

near the Bolstad Fjord, and on the banks of the Randals River, so favourably known for its salmon.) This was the second time he went over the Red Fells [hence named Sverre's Stay in one part], and he suffered great hardships. So they came down into Sogn, and dwelt by Aurland's Fjord (*dvölduz i Arlandz-firdi*), because many of his war-folk were sore; then they went the whole way north to Thrandheim, (Trondhjem)."

Let us try to describe the course of a day spent by a party of English ladies and gentlemen at the house of some civil landhandler, the great man among the natives for fifty miles round. Every one comes down from their moss-stuffed rooms to an early breakfast, regretting too often the attractions of chinks and moss to various unpleasant insects which live in the walls. Fresh eggs have been got (often from a considerable distance) for the guests, which are flanked by fried pink trout, and perhaps a stew of reindeer venison. We cannot depend on this latter luxury unless we are near some of the favourite haunts of deer, between Fille Fjeld and Romsdal, and not always then: but last night Per and Ole went up to the *câche* of stones, where the

“*stor bok*” lay hid from the claws of wolf and lynx. The *gaupe* (lynx) has a good nose for a dead deer; I well remember the disappointment of a college friend on finding that his “buck of grease” was a prey unto foxes and to these mischievous cat-a-mountains. Whether deer be scarce or not, those who pitch their tent among the mountains must feed on mountain fish (*fjeld fiske*), as they call our pink friends, till they are tired of the sight of their blue and red coats, coloured by the boiling in water and vinegar. Let me recommend the ladies to cook them themselves in cream instead of the usual butter; they will be delicious, or my recollections of dinners in the mountain dairies are most fallacious.

Coffee, of course, is good in Norway, where they say excellent coffee may be got in a few minutes in the meanest hut. To a certain degree this is true enough; when a traveller enters the log hut, the master soon bruises some coffee beans, and boils them on the ashes in a copper kettle; but the coffee thus made is apt to be over-roasted, and too bitter for English palates. However, few have the heart to complain of it, when presented in the yellow bowl brimmed up with thick cream, and sweetened with

a lump of sugar-candy from the nearest shop, to which the gaffer with pardonable pride calls attention as he pops it in. After breakfast the dogs are loosed, and the gentlemen go up the steep side of the fell, "on the grouse-chase" (*paa ryper-jagt*), as the Norsemen have it, who are always in their idiom "on the chase" for something or other. We were once rather amused at our English-speaking attendant saying, "My master is on the chase for ducks, but it is so fine, I must stay at home and catch my hay!" In some parts of the country they are not yet accustomed to the look of a pointer; a most decrepit and venerable old dog belonging to one of my friends was stigmatised as "a ferocious wolf-hound."

There are grouse in the stunted junipers and willows of the fell, and above them, on a higher *plateau*, are (*fjeld-rype*) ptarmigan in the reindeer moss^a. Perhaps they will not see a ptarmigan to-day, but will very likely, under the brow of the hill, catch a glimpse of black-wings, and hear the whirr of *tetrao tetrix*. A friend of mine, Ole Bjukna, hereafter to be mentioned, used to cut over a black-cock or grey-hen very neatly with a rifle bullet,

^a *Cladonia rangiferina*.

as we mounted to the fell betimes, while the scent of the deer lay fresh. Failing the "forest fowls" (*ur-oxe* is aurochs, auerochs, or the forest bull, and so *urhane* and *urhöne* are its cock and hen), our friends will bring back a few brace of grouse, and a snipe or so. I have seen snipe, woodcock, teal, and grouse shot within a radius of a few hundred yards on the Dovre Fjord. The grouse are almost the same as our purely British species, as the kind and learned Professor of Zoology at the Christiania Museum will tell you, having studied the subject closely. They are very uncertain birds to find, a moor being well-stocked with them one year and deserted the next. The old tradition in the Bergen district tries to find a law for their capricious movements:—"When the first snow comes with the east or north-east wind from the high mountains down into the valleys (near Bergen), then we here expect a great many *ryper*; but if the first snow comes with a west or south-west wind, it carries them up to the rocks, and we don't get many that year hereabouts^b." "In the summer," says the same ancient authority, "they feed on berries, tops of trees, and other greens; but

^b Pont., ii. 91.

in the winter they bury themselves in the deepest snow, where they sit in great heaps together, taking a magazine of food with them in their crops, stuffing the craw like a bag with elm-tops and birch-catkins, like the *urfugl*." They are cheap enough in Christiania market in the winter, the country people selling them for sixpence or eightpence a brace; rather a contrast to spring prices in England for ptarmigan from Norway." I have known the people of a house near Lom Fjeld so lazy as to refuse an offer of ptarmigan, though they seldom taste meat of any kind, on the ground that it was too troublesome to pluck the feathers.

Not an uncommon bird here is the great black woodpecker, which is very scarce with us. One was shot near Jerkin while I was there. The Norwegians call them Gertrude's birds, or "unlucky fowl," and think with the English peasants that their knocking is a sign of immediate rain, whence their provincial name of rain-bird. The legend which gave them the name of Gertrude's bird is curious; I hope that it is not already known to all my readers. I quote it in a convenient form from Mr. Brace's "Visit to Norway and Sweden." "When

our Lord and St. Peter were wandering, they came to a woman baking bread; her name was Gertrud, and she wore black with a red cap. Weary and hungry from their long journey, our Lord begged for a cake. She took a little dough and set it to bake, and it grew so large that it filled the pan. Thinking it too much for alms, she took a smaller bit of dough and began again, but this cake swelled also. She then took still less, and when the cake had become as large as the others, Gertrude said, 'You must go without; all my bakings are too big for such as you.' Then our Lord said, 'Because thou gavest nothing thou shalt be a little bird, and seek dry food between the wood and the bark, and drink only when it rains.' Immediately the woman was transformed into the *Gjertrud's-fugl*, and flew away through the kitchen chimney. She pecks the bark of trees for food, and whistles for the rain; for she always thirsts and longs to drink."

The *sobriquet* of "the unlucky one" is even older than this quaint tradition. There are several other species of woodpecker (*tre hakker*) found in Norway, e.g., the common green *picus*, *leuconotus picus*, *tridactylus picus*, and *picus major*.

The gentlemen have the best of the scenery to-day, if it is at all fine up on the fells; for notwithstanding the sneers of some travellers, who accuse Norwegian views of monotony and gloominess, there are some not to be beaten in any country. Fancy a fine brown moor, open on three sides for many miles, and surrounded, it may be, with peaks silver and black in a ring, as are the moors above Romsdal: to the westward a white strip of fjord is shining, and on the fourth side a slope of gray rock leaves the margin of the moor, and gradually rises into the side of a glittering snow-horn. That is a description of one moor near the Romsdal, but there are many which are equally beautiful, though the details are different. All round the sportsmen's feet the crushed juniper gives a faint pleasant smell. Two centuries ago juniper was in great repute in Oxford "to sweeten the chambers," just as now it is mixed with the fir-tops strewn over the floor of Norwegian houses. And here and there are seen the reindeer flowers (*rens-blomster*). Sometimes only the stalk of the ranunculus is left, and a faint "spoor" by its side shews what has been there. "*Rens!*" says the laconic guide on hands and knees,

who, if pressed, will add that the marks of the reindeer are fresh, and that they have gone up towards the peak of rock but lately. Then how the race-glass is plied, while they all follow the trail, until it shews a few black spots on the snow-covered field, which they know to be a herd of deer. I know of few prettier sights than a herd trotting up the side of a glacier, the big buck leading and the light dappled fawns lagging behind, if only one can get near enough for a good view. It would be strange if there were not lovely views in this land of lakes and moors, of valleys and torrents. Sometimes "all between the snow-peaks and the cataract" is a wall of pine-trees; in other places the mountain lawns and ledges hang in green tiers, on which we see the peasants high up gathering their "wild hay;" while, as in the Vale of Ida,—

"Far below them roars

The long brook falling through the cloven ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea."

I wish a painter could have been with me one summer evening in a little valley near Lesje. Up the narrow gorge we saw the stream foaming for miles under the black cliffs, till the view was closed by

a dark violet-range of hills; above them, very far off and high in the air, the white crater of Snæhattan. In the midst of this bold and melancholy scenery the traveller will get bright views over the valleys (especially at evening), which call to mind one or two of Turner's pictures, notably "Cheddar Cliffs," in the Kensington Museum. Let all beware of believing the assertions of the natives as to the number of birds on the fell. They are not quite such flattering deceivers as the Irish boys, who swear, "Och ! yer honor, shure the mountains crawling with grouse," and when reproached afterwards, plead that they thought his honour would like it. A Norwegian often promises a good day's sport, without knowing the height of an English gentleman's ambition. He can understand the feeling satirised by our French neighbours, which makes a Milord say, "It is fine, let us kill something!" but he would always stop when he thought enough had been killed for two days' dinner. They do not shoot many themselves, and what they do kill are generally shot sitting or running.

If our friends have had a good day's sport, about half-a-dozen brace to a gun on an ordinary fell and

with good walking, they will be smoking their pipes down the hill about the time that their wives or sisters are watching the cows come home to the farm, expecting their lumps of salt and fir-branch soup. If "the creatures" have all been sent up to the mountain pasture, and the *sæter* be within reach, it is worth while to walk up in the evening and hear the dairy maiden call the cattle home with her birch-wood *lure*, on which she executes a rough sort of *Ranz des Vaches*. Some people have said that this horn is blown to frighten away the bears, but I think this must have originated in some hoax upon travellers, as the girls only sound them "when the kye comes hame." There were other *lurer* in old times, which made a hoarser bellowing on the fjords—metal war-trumpets six feet long used by the Vikings. I have seen some in Denmark, which were dug up in a marsh by Fredericoborg, all knobbed with bronze, and curled like rams' horns. The cows are very fond of fir-soup, and grow fat upon it, but they have occasionally to "eat stranger meats" than that. It is common to feed them in the spring on young tops and sprouts of various trees, and in Nordland they make the heads of codfish with a little

grass into a mess for them^c. "Sometimes," says Breton, "they have coarse fodder to eat, sea-weed, and even stable clearings; yet with this fare the cows afford good milk. Sea-weed is also given in many fjords on the south-west." There is no doubt that this is true of the *Stransiddere*, or sea-coast people in Nordland, and any one who visits Jerkin may satisfy himself as to their eating fish-bones and manure from the stables in the winter, at least if he believes the landlord. But other authorities say that the milk is by no means so good as the above-mentioned passage asserts, but that it has an ancient and a fish-like smell. He also does not mention what I believe is necessary, viz. that sea-weed must be boiled before it is good food for either cows or pigs. The latter, being as omnivorous as men, manage to live in Norway on sea-weed, and fish, and boughs in places near the coast. Pontopidan affirms that "not only do the kine eat fish, but also the bones of their own species, which they swallow greedily, and gnaw them like dogs with their teeth!" This I should think might be put down to the credulity of the good old bishop, though

^c Breton.

his reflection on it is unexceptional,—“*necessitas omnium magistra.*”

While we are on the subject of strange food we may just mention the celebrated fir-bread, which has, in times of scarcity, partly superseded the *stumpebrod* of rye, and the universal *flad-brod*, or oat-cakes which are thus described by Bartholinus: “*Placentas pinsunt ex farinâ hordei et avenæ quas fladbrod vocant quasi panes planos.*” He also says that “cakes are made of the bark of fir-trees, and from the mast of beeches, acorns, and hazel-nuts in some parts, while in others men eat bread made of fish! others in years of scarcity in the last century invented a bread made of a mixture of elm bark, fir bark, cods’ roes, and oatmeal; this was not found to be at all healthy. Thistles also may be grinded and baked into bread.” In fact, they seem to have been as badly off in Norway, occasionally, as Foulon wished the French people to be. He wanted to make them eat hay, and was “made to eat some himself,” at the order of Judge Lynch^d.

“I never met with the bark-bread,” says a former traveller in Norway; “it must be a bitter substance,

^d Michelet, French Revolution.

as it is made of the innermost bark of young fir (or elm), which is first hung up in the air to dry, and then baked. This is beaten on wooden blocks, pounded as fine as possible, and afterwards ground in a mill. Finally it is mixed with a small quantity of grain, and then baked. It seems strange that the natives should never have used Iceland moss in times of dearth^e.”

The last “bark-year” (which is still vividly remembered) was 1815, when the English fleet blockaded the coast and put them to great straits. They had hardly any oatmeal left, and might have sung heartily,

“O and how blithe wad we feel
For a whang at the bannocks of barley meal,”

as the Duke of Argyle’s song ran. So at last, like sensible people, they consented to look on the treaty of Vienna as a great and holy fact, and accepted the supremacy of Sweden in name, with complete freedom in reality. Since that time there has been no necessity for keeping up the old practice of occasionally eating fir or elm bread, which was observed by some prudent people in times of plenty, that they might be prepared for times of famine. Old Burton, in his “Anatomie of Melancholy,” envies them their

^e Breton.

dura illa, and quotes a queerly named person, Dittmarus Bleskenius, to the effect that as they fed on butter and cheese, with stockfish for bread, and water or *serum* for drink, they lived oftentimes to be two hundred years old! As a matter of fact there are a good many old people in Norway, and in the time of Christian VI. tradition says that a jubilee-wedding party took place composed of eight married centenarians. Burton's friend may have heard of the woman in the fifteenth century who was supposed by credulous people to have lived in Nordland to the age of two hundred and thirty! As a matter of fact, opposed to these wild legends, the natives still deserve Burton's encomium, being "innocuous, free from riot, and free from disease," and, as a rule, long-lived.

The "whey," or *serum*, mentioned above of course means *syre*, or *syr-mjolk*, which is simply milk left standing a long time and stirred each day to prevent its settling into the bitter jelly, which forms another national delicacy. This sour milk is kept in some parts as long as six months, and its acidity can hardly be imagined. The people use it for vinegar, and consider it to be an excellent drink when mixed

with water. Many a thirsty soul is deluded into taking a draught of this nasty stuff, when it is brought out to his carriole for refreshment. It does not look different from sweet milk, the adjective of which should always be emphasised when a drink of milk is wanted.

After this long digression we must return to the house and learn what the ladies have found to amuse them during the day. There is a certain amount of amusement in working by the window, and watching the travellers come and go, coming in to write their names in the day-book while the small boy changes the horses. Some arrive in phaetons, *caleche-wunger*, some in the springless cart of the country called stool-car, or chair-carriage, (*stol-kjærre*). Now and then a leather-trousered, red-capped man lounges along, or a string of carriages comes over the hill in Indian file. There are always trout in the beck, which rise greedily, and there is generally a blue tarn near where mine host nets the "fell-fish." If there is no lake at hand, rude traps are built of stones to catch the trout. The brink of the lake must on no account be noisily approached, for at the proper time

many birds lie in the reeds, and *Messieurs* may possibly get a brace of duck or teal for breakfast. There is not the vast abundance of geese and duck in any part of southern Norway that people find in Lappmark or on the Swedish rivers, especially the well-known Torneå, but they are to be found in very comfortable numbers all about the country. Even by the high road wild ducks are often seen within shot; all along the Dovre Fjeld and the road leading up to it from Romsdal, the passer-by will see many ducks and loons on the meres.

The English ladies will be lucky if they find a *sæter* near enough to visit; if they do they will be rather astonished at the difference between English and Norsk dairies. The "dairy-maiden"¹ (often very old and ugly) is chiefly remarkable for personal filth combined with great cleanliness in her dairy pots and pans. We shall have many other opportunities of noticing these little huts, where the pedestrian in Norway spends so many pleasant days. When the dinner is getting ready, and the lean

¹ *Sæterpige*, sometimes *bue-dye*,—"the maid who lives in the hut for the security of the cattle against beast, and is employed in making butter and cheese, which she takes down occasionally to the valleys." They remain on the fells about three months in the year.

chicken or dry mutton hissing in the pan, it is time to go and meet the sportsmen, whose appetite will probably be fierce enough even to get the better of a tough old cock fried in butter and cut up into segments. This dish is common here as a delicacy for the English, and is valued almost as much as in Austria, where it forms the only dish of the inns, under the name of *bock hähnl*, or with chilis, *päprika hähnl* (in Hungary). However, any tolerable inn in Norway supplies fair claret, at half-a-crown a bottle, or at least Bavarian beer, while reindeer comes in sometimes, so that with soup from the provision box, a good dinner may be provided. The good lady of the house should be asked if she can provide *rödgröd*, the great dish all over Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; it is made of fruit juice, arrowroot, and cream; and as it is very good, I have extracted the receipt from an American book of travels*. In the evening what pleasant smoking

* "Take 3½ lbs. currant juice, three pints of water, sugar *ad lib.*, and a flavouring of almonds or cinnamon, 1 oz. or 1½ oz. Boil this mixture; when it begins to boil add 1¼ lb. of ground rice, or 1 lb. of sago. Boil for a quarter of an hour, stirring very often; pour out into moulds and leave to cool. Turn out and eat with cream and sugar. The juice of any other acid fruit would do as well."—*Brace*.

parties assemble round the kitchen fire, and how the English fraternise! The country not having yet become cockneyfied, most of the tourists are good company, and the kindness of the Norwegians entices our countrymen to throw off their national *morgue*.

In the evening while the visitors drink their grog, even the reserved Norsemen sometimes open a little bit of their minds, and talk about their fancies and superstitions of the people, though they are a little ashamed of their old legends, and as a rule prefer not talking about them before the unbelieving English. It is possible to get grog even here, though most people on their arrival expect to see only "corn-brandy." The best native spirit is Trondjem's *aquavit*, which is a sort of refined and glorified *finkel* (the common spirit made from oats), which is regarded here as a panacea for all earthly ills. It is not very strong, but tastes strongly of carraways, and it must be drunk neat, a mixture producing a milky-looking compound like watered Eau de Cologne. This prevents aquavit-toddy being very desirable, although I have seen Oxford men, "rained up" in Romsdal, discuss the mixture with

apparent gusto. Every one ought to bring some brandy with them from Christiania, at least enough for medicine; a lady may be very much knocked up with a long carriole drive on a rainy day, and require it. It is, however, necessary carefully to taste all that is got in Christiania, unless you are prepared to drink *chaloupin*, a brandy which is much liked there, though to an impartial visitor it has a strong taste of castor-oil.

It is very hard to find out how far the people believe in the spirits and demons of which we have heard in England. I never knew one confess to a fear of Nipen or the Wood-demon; perhaps Nipen is only respected on the sea-shore, where he can hurt the fishermen in the form of a fog. I suppose it is a long time since they heard Mólnir, the hammer of Thor, in the surf beating on the rocks, though the memory of the old gods is dimly kept up in the legend of the Asgaards Reia, or the wild huntsman's rout; the story itself is common to most European countries, but the name given to it here is curious, Asgaard being the home or guard of the Asa-men or Odin's family, who came from Asa-heim, near the Caucasus, now identified with Kiev. It

is said that they still put out the yule-cake and ale for Nipen in Österdal, a ceremony which Miss Martineau so amusingly describes in "Feats on the Fjord;" and it is certain that the peasants by the Miösen Lake devoutly believe in Uldra the water-sprite, a nixie with a fish's tail, who sings to the traveller like the lorelei, and is not content without at least one human victim a-year.

But we must postpone any further discussion of folk-lore till a more convenient occasion, for one cannot go on chatting late in log-houses where every one is kept awake by gossip in the kitchen. Besides, every one gets up early in this country; and our friends must be on the fells betimes to-morrow.

CHAPTER III.

HALLINGDAL.

THE usual route taken by travellers on leaving Christiania is by the railway to Eidsvoldbakken, the Runnymede of Norway, where their much-loved Constitution was drawn up before they consented to be joined to Sweden. Thence steamers ply constantly on the Miösen lake between that station and Lillehammer at the mouth of the Logen river. Thus one may get more than a hundred miles up the country in one day for about twelve shillings; but although this is a great advantage to sportsmen hurrying to their rivers, it is not such a very good plan for those who wish to see the best of the country and to take their time about it. I should recommend those who care for good scenery to leave the tamer beauties of the much-praised Gudbrandsdal, and go to the Fille Fjeld by Hallingdal and Hemsedal. Not only is the scenery grander, but the manners and costumes of the peasants are more thoroughly national than in any other part of Norway, except perhaps Thelemarken. The valleys are poor,

but with sufficient care in adjusting the journeys, a shelter and dinner, comfortable enough for English ladies to endure, may be got each day of the drive. It would be impossible to pass the night in any of the stations except Hamremöen, Næs, Gulsvig, and Bjöberg, except for gentlemen prepared to rough it; but any pedestrian who has been wandering about the moors would find fairly comfortable quarters all along the road. The scenery is as grand as that on the west coast above Bergen, and unquestionably superior to the more travelled road to the Dovre Fjeld. One can either drive straight from Christiania to Johnsrud (fourteen miles), the entrance to Ringeriget, the domain of a petty regulus named Ringe in the days before Harald Haarfagre, or go round by Drammen, which is about twenty-eight miles off. The scenery is not very striking on this part of the road, and even the vaunted view from the Paradise Hills over the Drammen Fjord is only wonderful to those who are as ignorant of mountain scenery as the Norwegian townfolk. Drammen is composed of three districts, Bragenæs, Stromsö, and Tangen. On each side of the river is one long street, with bogs and ruts enough to

break any ordinary carriage-springs. Consequently one sees a handsome carriage drawn by a pair of sturdy cart-horses, which could draw a cannon over the ruts. It is a place which exists only by the timber trade, which is to be increased by a new railway up the valley, the trees having been thinned off rather too much near the town. The merchants here would naturally not be very sorry if England were to go to war with one of the Baltic powers. In the Crimean war many of them doubled and trebled their capital by sending every available stick and ship to England for service in the Black Sea. I believe that a joint war of England and Sweden against Russia (such a one as was confidently expected here in 1863), would be popular in Drammen,—and nowhere else in Norway. The majority of people would not like the possible acquisition of Finland by Sweden, which would diminish the importance of Norway in the Union, while it would make every Swede happy and proud (till Russia took it back again). The feeling in Finland itself is rather different among the educated classes, i.e. the naturalized immigrants from Sweden. “We have fathers and brothers in Sweden (said one of these

gentlemen to me) who wish for nothing better than to invade Finland; but *nous autres*, we like the Russians and their government, which has given us so many privileges. In the army our soldiers are favoured and indulged: altogether I do not know yet how I shall act when that time comes." Such, he told me, was the universal feeling at Åbo. My friend was in such full assurance that some such crisis was approaching, that he had already sold his shipping property to English merchants. "Burnt dogs dread the fire," and his precipitation was due to the fact that the English had burned all his ships and stores on their last visit to the Baltic in the Russian war. Drammen would be a most desolate place for an utter stranger to loiter in; but any one who has experienced the warm hospitality of the resident families, which made our stay there so pleasant, will often wish himself back again for a day or two under the Paradise Hills.

The road to Thelemarken, the ancient Thelemörk, lies through Drammen and Kongsberg, but as a rule it is too rough a way for ladies to go. The best thing to do is to push on as far as the Riukan Foss, and then strike into Ringeriget on your return in

three or four days. The Thelemarkers are very good hands at wood-carvings, which they bring into Christiania. They also bring in all their heir-looms for sale, having been bitten by the same *æstrum* as the Irish, which drives them to their Paradise, the Northern States of America. Here they expect to get glorious wages and better living in every way, and in time to be able to buy land for themselves in Wisconsin and Minnesota, their favourite States. Those whom I have met do not dislike the idea of serving against the Confederates in "the Scandinavian Regiment;" this is lucky, for it is generally their real destiny. The consequence of all this is, that their filigree-brooches and old cups are all for sale, the price being low enough to justify the hypothesis that the metal was stolen originally from the neighbouring silver-mines and made into ornaments at home.

Not far from Drammen we entered Ringeriget ^a,

^a Ringeriget was anciently a great resort of elks, and in still more ancient times of bears: "Elsdyr or elling (anciently elgur) are seen in the parish of Fjörden, in Ringeriget, and Raumariget. 'Tis a harmless innocent creature, and keeps near the houses in winter." (*Pontopp.*, ii. 10.) The elks still shew this trait by coming out into the farms in Hedemark, and feeding in the turnip-fields

a circular and well-watered plain, walled in by high hills, from whose summit on a clear day the snowy Gousta Fjeld is seen. Probably those are the "mountains covered with eternal snow," which travellers some years ago inaccurately affirmed were to be seen from Christiania. Norwegians admire this part even more than the shores of Miösen, which call to mind our English lakes so strongly. They do not care for mountains, and wonder how we can leave the beauties of our own country. A lady living near the grandest scenery of the Sogne Fjord could not comprehend any enthusiasm for bleak black rocks or glaciers. I asked another Norwegian one day what view he should consider the finest in the world, and he replied unhesitatingly, "A large wide dale covered all over with corn." His taste was not so very bad after all, and we ought perhaps to take into account the fact that our grandfathers saw no more in the scenery of the Alps than did the Romans, and that even now, when it is the fashion to walk "with death and morning on the silver horns," there are still many of us who do not really care for by the roadside. They have been seen by travellers on the eastern side of Miösen looking over the hedge into the high road.

mountains. Perhaps in a few years the Norwegian taste will have risen to our present standard, and they may be as ready then to appreciate in our way the peculiar beauties of Gamle Norge, as now they are to drink to her prosperity. Near the farmhouse at Inge we caught the first sight of the Tyri Fjord, a circle of glassy lake dotted with islets and fringed with pines, so beautiful and peaceful that even the stolid fat boy who drove us from Holst's Hotel was moved to notes of admiration, and a muttered *Skjön ! Skjön !*

It has seen some wild work on its banks in early times. Here Sigurd the Stag was hunting when he met Hako and thirty other Berserks, "and there they slogged" (*oc der de slogis*), and Sigurd fell and was taken home to his mother Snake-in-Eyes^b, while Hako carried Sigurd's daughter home, and would have made a wedding, (*brud-hlaup*, or bride's-arrival,) but she never came, for he killed himself near Sundvolden, near the Bauta-stone which marked his battle with the Stag. Here reigned Harold Fair-hair till he waxed strong and conquered the kings

^b The image of a "lind-worm," or dragon, killed by Regner the ancestor of the Norwegian kings, was perpetuated in the eyes of his descendants.

of Romsdal, Gudbrandsdal, Hedemark, and others, and left his old realm of Hringa-riki to Eric of the Bloody Axe, his son. In this place too lived St. Olaf's mother, wife of Sigurd the Sow, who saw Christianity make its first permanent impression here, to the disgust of the heathens on the shores of Miösen. All this plain was well fought over by King Hako, son of Hako, when he chased the rebel Ribbungs from Oslo (Christiania) to Drammen on the ice of this lake by which we are driving, and caught their army at last in the gorge (perhaps this very Krogleven), and so ended their ravages and crimes which had been the scourge of all the valleys in Norway. Earl Skuli hearing of the exploits of these rebels, pursued them with his ships; "he had muckle ships six and twenty, and many small^c," dragging them from the Tyri Fjord to the Rands Fjord, and after that to Traufn (i.e. Drammen): the rebels set upon him as he was pulling the last ship out of the torrent into the fjord, but were repulsed, and took refuge in the forest between Drammen and Christiania.

The waters were so still that it was hard to say

^c Siga of Haco Haconson.

where the bank ended and the reflection began. We drove along the shore on a splendid road, such as one could hardly find elsewhere, even in England. When the government takes a road in hand they never leave it till it is as perfect as large grants of money and a staff of good engineers, sappers, &c., can make it. I believe they intend to devote between forty and fifty thousand pounds a-year to improvements of this kind. If any one would like to know what "these roads were *before* they were made," he can easily satisfy himself by driving in some unfrequented part, where the hills are not planed off and the valleys not filled up. I was once obliged to drive for a day and a night along a road of this kind in Hedemark, and I never saw a more diabolical highway, or one which had so much "up" to so little "down."

It is a pity that flunkeyism should have invaded this pretty Ringeriget. Still it is a melancholy fact. Tourists are taken at Krogleven to the "King's View" and the "Queen's View," and as we drove along, a post was shewn us at the roadside, where "the Princess Sophie had *inaugurated*" another view! We lunched at Sundvolden, where there is a tolerable inn, but

the charges are higher than they would be if this were a regular station. In the evening we got to Hønefoss, whither the Christianians send all unhappy lion-hunters, telling them that this is one of the first falls in Norway. I believe it is the only fall of which there is a photograph. It hardly deserves the praise which has been lavished on it; there is a large weir down which a mass of waters foams, forming a good cascade, but a poor waterfall.

The inn is near the bridge, and in full hearing of the noise of the foss, with a pretty garden on the river bank:—

“The floor with tassels of fir was besprent,
Filling the air with its fragrant scent. . . .
And one was singing the ancient rune
Of Brynhild’s love and the wrath of Gudrún.
And through it, and round it, and over it all
Sounded incessant the waterfall.”—LONGFELLOW.

Haardraade came this way to chastise some rising against his power, “and fire glowed in all the roofs,” says Thiodolf. “The dog who eats trees,” i. e. fire, was the favourite means of compelling an unruly valley to obedience, but this was the only time that Ringeriget was sacked.

Madame Gladvedt has some splendid rooms in her house, with views of Norway, and apparently

of France, painted on the walls. It would be hard to beat her breakfasts in profuseness, even at Oxford. Three sorts of bread and barley rusks were brought for us,—a lady and gentleman,—flanked by four kinds of native cheese, one the famous *gammel ost* in its glass case. This is the best of Norwegian cheeses, which is not saying very much. It is made of whey or skim milk mixed with thick cream; moreover, it must be made in a press devoted for years to this particular cheese, and thereby impregnated with the strength and savour of twenty generations of *gammel ost*. It is eaten in powder like parmesan, and has a queer fishlike taste. It cannot be eaten till it is a year or two old. I think that there is a mixture of goat's milk with the cow's milk used in its manufacture.

It will hardly be believed that several books on Norway corrupt *gammel ost* (old cheese) into *gammel orske*! which is supposed to be put for *gamle Norge* (old Norway). One traveller comments on the patriotism of the Norwegians as shewn in the name of their favourite food! It will long be a joke against the English in Christiania.

Besides the bread, and cheese, and coffee, neat-

handed Ingebjorga, the maidservant^d, brought in a dozen eggs and some fish-rissoles. A second course was intended to follow, of veal cutlets and dried fish, salmon and *sild*. This will shew the absence of a golden mean in the Norsk farmer's ideas of meals; there are only extremes, and the tourist gets nothing at all or a dinner for ten. Here the provision-box comes in useful, if you tell the hostess to put into it of her superfluity that you may be prepared for the next lean and foodless station. The *sild* which I mention are the freshwater herrings, which are caught in great numbers in the Miösen Lake. Another name for the fish is *marena*. We have the word *syle* in England for herring, but it is used chiefly for the young fish, whereas in Norway *sild* is the broadest name for herrings of all sorts:—

“But our folk call them syle and nought but syle,
And when they're grown why then we call them herring.”

JEAN INGELOW.

This part of Ringeriget is the haunt of another

^d The old name for maidservant was *daul*, which used also to mean 'a doll,' Danicè, *ducke*. *Bruda*, 'a bride,' was sometimes used in the same way. So that the little girls in the north of England called their 'babies' brides, dolls, and ducks, much the same as they do now, nine hundred years later.

freshwater fish, the *krokke*, about the size of a sprat, which is said to abound in vast numbers in the Tyri Fjord.

The road to Hallingdal leads up a fearful hill to Vehme, a dreadfully dirty house; children with matted hair stared out of a low hovel in the yard, and a lout with blubber lips and dirt indescribable got the horses at last. However, ladies can remain in the carriage while the day-book is signed, and console themselves with thinking that they will not be required to stay in such places. Even the magpies at this place looked draggle-tailed! It is curious to see how completely at home these birds are in every yard; you may sometimes see a dozen at once as tame as chickens, and any one who hurts a *skjære* would be thought as wicked as if he had killed a stork in Holland, or a magpie in China, where they are said to be especially holy, inasmuch as they form a living bridge on a certain day in the year, when the Celestials walk down to earth. They are allowed to build in the barns, and a comfortable hole is made for them in the roof. The peasants acknowledge that they do a great deal of mischief, but think that it would be unlucky not to protect

them; the uncanny bird would revenge itself somehow if its nest was injured: so they put up with it, and generally assure travellers that they are really very fond of magpies.

Other names for the bird are *skade* and *skior*, or *tún-fugl*; the last refers to their domestication in the *tún* (town) or enclosure of the homestead. Pontoppidan says of them, that if they did any damage in the farmyard, the farmer nevertheless put up with it, "thinking that this his neighbour has a greater right than other birds of prey, and that it well knows how to retaliate an injury." The good man, however, took a little revenge on the sly occasionally; he boiled the magpie's eggs and put them back in the nest, thinking that the bird would sit on them until it died!

After the next stage to Hovland, a rich farmer's house furnished in a modern style, a long fir-wood begins, through which the road goes for about ten miles, till it dips down the glassy fjord at Hamremoens, and winds under the cliffs. Thence it is a short distance to Green's, a private house where they are glad to receive travellers. Green's family has been settled here for centuries, and belong to

the ancient nobility, which died out under the Danes. Here the regular Hallingdal costume begins to be common. The women wear their waists so high that all their garments begin to spread out just between the shoulder blades, which makes them look like hunchbacks. In front there is a pretence at a waist, somewhere between the bosom and the throat, followed by a large space of white garment between it and the skirt. Their jackets are trimmed with silver lace, and they wear a queer turban, also laced and spangled. The men indulge in equally short waists, and look just like charity children whose lower coverings button high up on the outside of their waistcoat. I have seen one of these waistcoats scarcely four inches long, with a miniature jacket to match, resplendent with half-dollars and silver sugar-loaves of buttons. At a little distance a man in this dress looks like a large pair of trousers walking by themselves, or the advertisements in "Bradshaw" of "the Sydenham" and "the 16-shilling!" Their trousers are often ornamented with gaily-coloured worsted, as well as the jacket, and they all wear silver studs and brooches, so that a Hallingdaler in his best clothes is a striking object.

The costume is not very unlike that of the Thelemarkers, the gayest dressers in Norway; the latter are said to look like "the old pictures of Charles XII., or the combatants in a Spanish bull-fight. The jacket and waistcoat are short and of bright colours, the knee-breeches are braided along and across with red cord; the gaiters have large buckles, and the shoes have clocks and stars of silver." The Hallingdalers are fine men, and set off their costume very well. Sometimes the jacket is replaced by a short coatee with the tail split into three, and with a standing-up collar adorned with braid.

CHAPTER IV.

HALLINGDAL (continued).

ADMIRATION shewn by us for the antique brooch of our hostess in the morning, brought every one round us with ornaments for sale. Even the fat scullion had a "confirmation brooch" hung with tinkling plates, and faintly gilt, to sell to the English. A little girl in the yard wore a pretty *spænde*, or waist-buckle, which we bought. Brooches like little tambourines, some of a very graceful pattern, old marriage-belts of red cloth and brass, and porridge spoons, were brought for our approval. Soon afterwards a woman offered her wedding-ring for sale, and our *skyds*, a postboy in green socks and gloves, wanted to trade his studs and garters against a gold ring I wore.

The Kröderen Fjord is very beautiful in the early morning, and as horses and carriages must be ferried separately across it on the rude raft of pine-logs, there was ample time in our case to photograph in the mind the long level of shining water, reflecting a screaming osprey overhead, and closed at the far end by a black dome of rock. We drive along the

fjord side till we come to Sorteberg, a poor house built in the shadow of "the black cliff," to which its name is owed. From Sorteberg a break-neck road leads to Gulsvig, under enormous cliffs of black-veined rock, with a little snow a-top (this year is unusually cold), and hawks screaming half-way up in all directions. We are under the Eggesdal's Fjeld, which reaches from Green's to Næs, our whole day's journey. The hawks are chiefly kestrels and sparrow-hawks, but occasionally a *gled* (kite) shews himself, and frightens the chattering "corbie craws" (the *krager*, or *kraakoer*), whose gray hoods are seldom far off, whether one is driving under the hills or into a farmyard. At the end or head of the fjord is Gulsvig, a house highly recommended by Murray "as an excellent place at which to stop a few days; the fishing is good: shooting well spoken of. Bears are frequently met near here." It is some time since this was written, and the glory may have departed from Gulsvig since Murray's agent drove there, but at present the family do not deserve enthusiastic praise. As for bears, I do not suppose one has been heard of near the farm for many years. In this sentence about the bears,

as in many other notices of places mentioned in the guide-book, the writers very needlessly alarm ladies at the expense of correctness. Tourists read in their book that "bears abound," "wild beasts are very destructive in this part," and so on; and do not know that these statements rose from fancy or false witness given by the peasants. I amused myself one day by asking each driver on a well-travelled road if there were bears or lynx on the hill; if so, had he seen or shot any. Every one of them answered all these questions in the affirmative. One boy was quite indignant at my laughing at his story of the way in which he shot a huge bear unassisted. But if you ask if there are wild beasts in the backyard, they will declare that there are. I have heard a solemn peasant near Bergen pointing out the haunts of various wild animals to an admiring Englishman, and gravely wondering that there were not so many in England. This accounts for the wondrous tales in Murray of adventures in places where "bears abound," of the sæter-girls lighting the fire every evening to keep off wolves, &c. The author adds, "it is a wild and picturesque scene." It might be that, certainly, if

it had ever existed. But it is useless to inveigh against this romancing spirit, when so many travellers fall into the same mistake. In a well-known book of travels the author describes a climb up Snæhattan, which is represented as an appalling undertaking, instead of a stiffish three hours' walk up a hill covered with mica and lumps of gneiss; it is certainly disagreeable, but nothing of an exploit. Our traveller reached the top, and "fell exhausted by fatigue. I know not how long I slept, but when I woke I found that the guide had lighted a fire, to keep off the *wild beasts*"! Reindeer? or lemming-rats, I wonder; for he would hardly have seen anything else in an afternoon on the Dovre fells. He would have done much better to have gone back to the hotel whence he came, than have gone to sleep on the stones, but he is evidently very grateful for his narrow escape from the beasts. Another author has gravely stated, on the authority of some "chaffy" sæter-girl, that the birchen *lure* is sounded in the evening, not to call the cows home, but to keep off the bears, which prowl at that time especially. An English traveller asked the other day quite seriously of a Norwegian gentleman if it were not rather dangerous to walk

about the streets of Christiania by night on account of the wolves! The only wild beasts I ever heard of there were two elks, who came near the railway station in a fog, and were chased by the population. I believe one of the elks was shot; but they ought to have beaten any field of pursuers if the old legend is true, that these animals used to carry couriers, and go at an average pace of 240 miles per diem! Another writer says "that he heard *jackals* and wolves howling at night in Bergen in August, and apparently accompanying the watchmen in their monotonous chaunt." This last astounding statement is quoted in a book written about twenty years ago by Lieut. Breton, who travelled here. I am surprised to find on a reference to Barrow that he appears to credit the same absurd hoax. He travelled through a part of Norway in the year 1833. There are very few wolves ever seen south of the Fille Fjeld, and it is said that in old times there were none, till the army passing over the Fille Fjeld in a year of dearth, A.D. 1718, the wolves followed the train of provisions to Bergen: so says the learned bishop of that diocese^a.

^a Pont., ii. 5.

The people at Gulsvig are rather extortionate, and their day-book shews that many other people have been served the trick upon travellers which we experienced. The farmer pretends that all his horses are "a long mile off," and that you must of necessity wait there two or three hours, though Gulsvig is "a fast station." After a little waiting he lets out that a present of *tilsigelse penge* (or money for sending off to the horses) will enable him to gratify your wishes. On payment of this *hongo*, such as Speke and Grant had to pay for passing through a territory, the beasts are led in from the next field. At a fast station the law of 1845 enacts that six post-horses are to be kept ready for travellers; at the rest you may have to wait some time unless you have sent on a *forbud* messenger. The farmers are required to lend horses in proportion to the size of their farm; but they need not be kept ready unless an appointment has been made. If the traveller is late without just cause, he must pay waiting-money (*vente-penge*).

It is lucky for the English that Norway is governed by a parliament of farmers, who are fond of the office of *storthingmand*, or M.P., and being paid

for it, feel bound to do some work. They have made an excellent set of road laws. The rate of payment is fixed at about twopence an English mile per horse; a little more is charged for a cart or carriage. The farmers, whose turn it is to keep the stations, are bound to provide food and lodging according to a very economical government tariff, posted in the house. A book is kept for travellers' complaints, which (if written in Norse) are examined by a government inspector twice a-year. Some power, however, is left in the station-master's hands: for instance, he can regulate the weight to be carried, and if the visitor has over-driven his horses, can refuse any more till adequate compensation has been deposited. Against this the traveller can appeal at any time within a month, and recover his money if he is in the right. Of course such quarrels rarely arise, but some gentlemen last year (1863) had to deposit a considerable sum and return to plead their cause in Christiania without making their intended tour, the local arbiter not having been able to decide the knotty point. The Norwegians are proverbially fond of their horses, and cannot understand the fast driving of the English,

to whom time appears to be an object, much to their amazement. The consequence of this fondness is that they get work from their beasts for a much longer time than we do, though the food is much coarser, and the duration of a horse's life is said to be twice as long on the average in Norway as it is in England.

After Gulsvig the road trends by the brimming Hallingdal river, which now sweeps out into a chain of little lakes, now narrows to a river again. After passing two unimportant places, Aavestrud and Islandsrud, we had the pleasure of driving through the neat village of Næs to the house of Landhandler Meidell. Near the village I saw a good many wild duck, but none had been shot by Meidell that day. He had got some *ryper* to make up for it, which though tough were an acceptable addition to the stores from our cherished *tine*. Næs is so called from the 'snout' or 'nose' of the hill, which runs down nearly to the pretty little church. We left Næs betimes, and soon got to a tidy farm (Haftun), where the people were gay with all the glory of bright waist-coats, short jackets, and silver-lace garters. The men who drove us to-day all wore regular "Scotch

brooches," with two thick pins; the coarse linen is pulled through the ring of the brooch and skewered with the pins in a rough way. It requires a stuff of the coarseness of *vadmel* to stand such treatment. One cannot quite make out how the old heroes used the gigantic buckles and brooches which are preserved in the museums of the North. I have seen a fibula of iron inlaid with gold whose moveable spike was nearly nine inches long. Their cloaks must have been made of wolf's-skin at least, like those of the old Berserker:—"Beerserki pellibus lupinis ad terrorem hostibus incutiendum induti, et externi amicti, quoties pugnandum esset^b." One of the "loon-skin caps, called *kabbutz* by the vulgar, and of extraordinary toughness," might be advantageously pronged together by these buckles, but nothing of civilized make.

Near here we passed a buxom damsel working in a field, dressed à la Molly Seagrim, viz. in one long dirty garment fastened at the throat by some filagree buttons, which we should have liked to add to our little collection of Hallingdal ornaments, if we had ventured to summon her. It would have

^b Thormius Torfæus, in Pont.

been as cruel as buying the shell-girdle of an Abyssinian maid, which forms her holiday costume!

At Löstegaard, where we tried to drink some ancient sour milk, are some odd pictures on the wall. One represents the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. The donkey is blue and of a giant size, approaching a small gamboge village. It is much in the same style of art as an "elefant" depicted at Gulsvig, which had the body of a dog and the tail of a lion. A venerable old man with a red cap on his white locks brought out some musty *flad-brod*, while the horses were being put into the harness decorated with mouse-shells (*muus-skaller*), or cowries. We get our 'mussel' (the fish) from this word *mús-skal*, I should think, not from the Latin *musculus* (little mouse), which gives us our 'muscle' (of the body). The interior of the house was not desirable, from the presence of a dish of old bones and a raw cow-skin hanging by the fireplace. The people at these small stations are too poor to have anything worth looking at in their houses. At one of the poorest, however, near Gulsvig, in yesterday's journey, I was surprised at finding some books. I opened them, expecting to find the usual Bible and

“religion-book,” or a book of revivalist hymns, and to my amusement found them to be a treatise on *La Philosophie de Bon Sens*, and a French translation of the *Satyricon* of Petronius. Fancy the deboshed paragraphs of the dandy courtier, the *arbiter elegantiarum*, straying so far from Paris and the shade of learned Universities! Would not he have been flattered at the idea that Gothic and Hyperborean boors, *equisones*, *opiliones*, *bussequæ*, pored over his novel beyond Thule!

By the way, among the many places which claim the honour of being ultima Thule, is Thelemarken, on the strength of its first two syllables, as if it were the march of Thili or Thule! This claim is on a par with that of some learned Northern doctor, who held that Ulysses finally settled in Nordland; that Scylla and Charybdis were evidently the Maelström, while the hills of Sicily were easily recognised in the cliffs of Helleland (the Holy Land): Ogygia was taken to be Hinden, one of the Lofoden Islands, in which the name *Ægy-rs-fjord* preserves the ancient name. Who Calypso really was, is not explained so clearly; perhaps she was a glorified sæter-girl living in the island at the time. By this exquisite

fooling Ulysses is identified with an Outin, or Otyn, who figures in the *Heimskringla*, on the strength of his pun in the cave of the Cyclops. I wonder how the simple peasant got on with his Petronius, "the mad rogue," with his "flashes of merriment that set the table in a roar." The gaudy book looked quite chapfallen between a volume of French philosophy and a Danish hymn-book, "with not one to mock its grinning" but a Lutheran yeoman, whose mind must have been a curious hotch-potch, if he studied all portions of his library alike.

At the foot of the Hemsedal Fjeld the river of the same name rushes into the quiet Hallingdal stream, with a prodigious roar of two great cascades, near which the picturesque bridge is built. Years ago a traveller drove over this bridge into the cascade, and was naturally mashed up in the foam—horse, and carriage, and all. The ascent to Ekre is very long and very steep, so that "all hands" must get out and walk for some time. The costume changes directly we leave Hallingdal. The men wear green jackets (still absurdly short) ornamented with worsted and velvet, and with embroidery on the collars; many wear bright green stockings and gloves. The women

have turbans like the Thelemarkers. Ekre is a rough place, but the people were very hearty, and made us welcome to some *rumme-bunke* and *flad-brod*. This *bunke* is a simple dish; a bucket of milk is left to itself for a month, and is thereby coagulated into a bitter blueish jelly coated with half an inch of sub-acid cream. The consumer must powder rye-bread (*stumpe-bro'*) all over it, and (in civilized parts) add sugar, nutmeg, and fresh cream. Eat with wooden porridge spoon, taking equal parts of cream and jelly in each spoonful. By stirring the milk in the bucket every day sour-milk is produced, the sour and bitter drink of which, I have said before, the cottagers are so fond.

CHAPTER V.

HEMSEDAL.

THE youth who drove us from Ekre was very intelligent, and, like most peasants on a carriage road, has got an English book to read in the winter evenings. He pointed to the horses with a triumphant exclamation of "Good hosh!" and then snatched my Bennett to see if he could read any English. On the north-east of Ekre we drove between Great and Little Skogshorn, both about six thousand feet high. The lesser Horn is the most remarkable, from its similarity to a real one in shape: there was a good deal of snow on it, which it drained by three high waterfalls side by side, shooting over a cliff under the Horn. They have the name of Hydna Foss between them. By the roadside is the Hemsedal Church, with a charming little cemetery filled with every sort of cross. It is curious that so many forms of the cross became naturalized in Norway and Denmark, as is indicated by the many different shapes found in churchyards and museums. Besides the old circle pierced with

four smaller circles arranged crosswise, which is found so often in Cornwall, there are several Byzantine forms. These, it is true, are generally small, and made in gold or silver. The well-known *Dagmar's kors*, which was dug up at Roeskilde, near Copenhagen, is a pectoral Byzantine cross with rude but bright enamel paintings, on one side of the Crucifixion, on the other of the Virgin Mary and divers Apostles. This is not an uncommon sort to find in Norwegian collections, but it is more usual to see variations of the Maltese cross here. One will have each bar crossed again, another has a ring or a trefoil at each extremity; the last form looks very well in a cemetery, the effect of the ornamented trefoils being to make each limb into a separate cross, while another is made by placing a ball or circle in each of the right angles at the middle. Sometimes these round spaces are filled up with carvings, as may be seen in the cross of walrus-tooth which was the property of Gunhild, daughter of King Sweyn Estridsen, and is kept at Copenhagen. At the top is a medallion of the Trinity, holding one end of a scroll containing words from the Bible: this some devils hold at the other

end, and read with grotesque gestures. In the middle is a rainbow forming the throne for the Last Judgment, and at the extremities of the arms are carvings of the blessed laughing, and the lost weeping, all except a little child who turns round and is praying to be let out! In many cases gold or silver cruciform plates are hinged together so as to form a thick relic-box (*reliquier-stemme*). That Byzantine and other Eastern crosses should be found here is not surprising, when we recollect how many Kufic coins, Arabic dinars and dirhems, and collars hung with all sorts of Eastern money, have been found. The taste for these came in with the trade through Russia to the Caspian and the Euxine, between the tenth and twelfth centuries; perhaps more than anything from the spoils of the Vikings' raids, and their visits to Constantinople and the Holy Land. Harald Haardraade was for a long time captain of the Northern Guard at Constantinople, and was lucky enough to "be in at" three plunderings of the Imperial Palace. The Norsemen, wanting an outlet for their love of pillage, invented this plan of sacking the palace whenever a new Emperor was chosen, just as it has been the immemorial custom at Rome

for the Cardinal who is elected Pope to allow his house to be gutted by his servants^a, and not to take any of his former chattels to the Vatican. Sometimes there is a mistake, and the disappointed candidate is prematurely plundered by his servants, and I suppose the Varangians were not very particular about robbing precisely at the right time. Harald incurred the Emperor's high displeasure for making love to a princess, whom he shut up, and barred the harbour with a boom, so as to catch the Norseman. However, he broke the boom with a rush of his "war-drake," and left the princess on the shore with a message to the Emperor, and sailed away to the Black Sea and up to Kiev, where lived King Jaroslaus, whose daughter he married. Haldor the Icelander played Harald himself the same sort of trick, when he got his boat ready on the fjord by night, and stole back to the room where the King and Queen were sleeping, thinking that they had got Haldor safe in their power. Suddenly Haldor stood by the bed armed, and said, "Give me my mark of gold, I am off to-night for Iceland." On the King delaying, he said, "Give me the gold ring

^a Roba di Roma.

on the Queen's arm. I have the game in my own hands and I will play it out: it is uncertain whether we shall meet often enough after to-night for me to have a better chance." Then the Queen said, "Let him have the ring. Don't you see that he stands over us with his heart full of murder." So Haldor outwitted the clever King for once^b. Harald and his men brought 'gold and silk galore' from Kiev with fair Alis of the Russ, as did Sigurd the Pilgrim from the sack of Sidon fifty years after Haardraade's death. It is said that many of the peasants on the Sogne Fjord can trace their pedigrees to the soldiers who went to Jorsala (Jerusalem) with Sigurd, and can tell legends of the Eastern luxuries and wealth, which were brought home. It was about this time that the historians notice the introduction of many luxurious fashions in dress, "fine laced cloaths, golden plates buckled on their legges, high-heeled shoes stitched with silke, and covered with tissue of gold, jacket-sleeves ten feet long, narrow and platted up to the shoulder," &c. Then we hear of Magnus Barefoot, the grandson of Harald Haardraade, that he had a *silki hjup*, or *joop*, a long

^b Münch.

silken cloak before and a lion broidered on amber silk behind (*oc a bak guli silki leo*). He must have looked rather like a Chinese mandarin of our days. "And Eivindr had a silken mantle like the King." The word *joop* is said to have been spread by the Vikings all over Europe, and to be used now in the French form *jupon*, and the Italian *giubba*. This same "Konnungr Magnus Barfod" abolished the trailing cloak, the Oriental dress which may have dated from the time when the Asamen, their forefathers, left the Caucasus; hence his name "Bare-foot," from his introduction of short breeches and bare legs^c!

The scarlet silk mantles are often mentioned in the Saga of King Olaf, and those who have only read Longfellow's songs taken from it, will remember the leaping of Olaf and his marshal Kolbiorn from the ship in his last battle. Each stood on the bulwark with his *hjup* flowing out, when the enemy boarded:—

"Then Kolbjörn speaks in the ear
Of King Olaf a word of cheer,
In a whisper none may hear,
With a smile on his tremulous lip.

^c Saga of Magnus Barfod.

“Two shields raised high in the air,
Two flashes of golden hair,
Two *scarlet meteors*’ glare,
And both have leaped from the ship.

“There is told a wonderful tale,
How the King stripped off his mail
Like leaves from the brown sea-kale,
As he swam beneath the main.

“But the young grew old and gray,
And never by night or day
In his kingdom of Norroway
Was King Olaf seen again.”

“Enn hvarnög sem þat hefir verit, þá kom Olafr Konungr Tryggvason aldri sidán til rikis í No-regi.”

‘However that might be, there came Olaf the King, Tryggva’s son, never since to his kingdom in Norway.’

The Eastern crosses in the cemetery have led us a long way from Hemsedal, and the exceedingly bad road which leads to Tuff and the ascent of the fjeld, the details of which must fill another chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

HEMSEDAL FJELD.

THE next house of any importance by the Hemsedals Elv is Tuff, the old station of Torp^a. It is a clean, comfortable place, and quite as good to pass the night in as Bjöberg, the usual halting-house. A stay at Tuff would involve driving about thirteen miles more next day. The pleasant old dame of the farm produced a box of most excellent home-made biscuits; these with cheese, butter, and beer are all the provisions that can be got here, except perhaps bacon and eggs as a great favour. The road rises considerably between Tuff and Bjöberg, winding between snow-covered fells, the snow coming down between the spurs of the hills nearly to the level of the road on the other side of the river. The road from here down to the Kröderen Fjord on the south, and to the Fille Fjeld on the north-west, ought to be interesting to Englishmen. It was here that a small force of English archers made a great sensation in the reign of John Lackland. Their lively move-

^a Torp, or þorp, is our 'thorp,' a hamlet.

ments and "hurrah!" seemed unaccountable to the Norsemen. We hear so much about the exploits of these "war-folk" in England, that it is only fair to read the story of the return visit of some English bowmen to Norway. Here is the whole chapter from King Sverre's Saga, *Frá Ribbauldum*, 'Concerning the Ribalds, whom Ión Engla-konungr sent to help Sverre, and his friends the Birch-legs.'

"John King of England had sent Sverre the King, in the summer before, when he was in Bergen, two hundred war-men (*her-manna*), who were called Ribalds. They were as swift of foot as a deer; they were mighty bowmen, and overmuch unruly, and kept themselves not from doing all the ill they could. These Ribalds came down into Hallingdal^b, and went from Hallingdal over to Sognedal, and so down into Thelemarken^c. Wherever they went they slew all, young and old, queans and carles^d; beeves, too, all that they met they slew; dogs and cats too, and all that was quick they killed, burning the housesteads, where they passed through. But if men assembled themselves for defence, the Ribalds leaped

^b Haddingdal.

^c Pelemörk.

^d *konur oc karlur.*

off to the fells and the firns^e (wastes), and appear again where none looked for them. They harried the farms where never before had an army come, and did their war-work in a way unknown here before." Then we read of the Ribalds going back to Bergen, to help the King in the siege of Tonsberg, and doing good work by shooting down the men on the battlements. One of them was killed by a javelin, and the English set up a loud shout (*skræktu hált*, 'shrieked high'), and stormed the castle. Víking Vefu, the rebel leader, was killed by them, who had been the greatest warrior of his time. In the Saga of Hako Hakoson, the Ribbung rebels, whom Hako defeated in Ringeriget, fled "up the dales by paths which they knew well." One edition explains that this path was up "Hadingiadal," and so to Valdery, by the route which we are taking over the Fille Fjeld. The army of Birch-legs, which the Ribalds came to help, got their name in this way:—Eystein, a son of King Eystein Haraldson, as he declared, fled into Sweden, and got money and arms to equip a guerilla force in Norway. This band lived by plundering the farmers of the central provinces, but were sometimes

^e á fjöll oc á firn.

overpowered and driven to the "woods and firns." Being without tailors and new clothes, they repaired or replaced their lower garments with birch bark. Hence the word *Birki-beinir*, or Birch-legs, which at first was used contemptuously, but when they grew powerful was willingly retained by the army, whose allegiance had been transferred to King Sverre, when John sent the Ribalds.

We got to Bjöberg late at night, beguiling the way with old legends of the country. The night was very frosty, and we hoped to have seen a fine aurora borealis, but there was no more than a faint light in the north. In September last year there was hardly any clear night on which I did not see an aurora. If the air is damp it is rarely seen, and I suppose the dampness of this season has postponed it, for we have not seen "the Merry Dancers" during a whole month.

The skyds-boy assured me that we should find good accommodation at Bjöberg, so that we were disgusted at finding the house full, and no wish to receive us on the part of the host. Tuff lay thirteen miles behind us, and the Fille Fjeld was twenty-one miles in front, with two long and steep

ascents on the way; we were therefore obliged to remain, and the host at last deigned to help my wife from the carriage. He proposed that we should pass the night in the loft, which was already occupied by several forbidding-looking roughs. The door of the "guest-room" was locked, the station-master saying that a Norwegian *advocatus juris* was asleep in there, and could not be disturbed. Unfortunately, he let out that there was a little closet beyond the lawyer's bedroom, which we might have occupied. Almost before he had let fall these words, with an apologetic shrug of his shoulder, I had instituted a vigorous kicking and rattling at the door, which brought the gentleman out in great alarm. Of course he was very civil, and we took possession of the inner closet, which was of the smallest dimensions. Our host shut the door, and never came again that night, notwithstanding our entreaties for a little cold water and food, as we had postponed dining on purpose to have a good meal at this place. We had to go to bed without our dinner, though we extemporised a little meal out of the *tine*. This unhappily had run rather dry, so that there was nothing to eat

but gooseberry jam, sardines, and sweet biscuits, and nothing to drink but brandy innocent of water. Somehow or other we managed to go to sleep, and put off our dinner till breakfast-time. In the morning my request for a basin or tub with some cold water, was met by a hearty laugh at the idea of washing in a basin. A tea-cup would have apparently been more suitable to their habits. They looked as if they all followed the good old Norse custom, kept up religiously in Thelemarken, of washing only on "washing-day," i. e. Saturday, Loverdag or Lördag. At length we sallied out, and found the Herr Advocatus Juris gone, and all the respect which he had monopolized, transferred to ourselves.

Reindeer, fried potatoes, and coffee soon dispelled the fearful memories of the night, and we began to find the landlord a very pleasant fellow. He brought in his little daughter Christina to exhibit her silver ornaments, and produced a drinking-cup which had been in his family ever since it was made in Bergen about 1640, as the inscription on it stated. It was engraved all over with a stiff pattern, and stood on three globular feet. The landlord asked 50s. for

it, but no doubt would have taken less. He was a simple, honest sort of fellow, as appeared when we asked for the bill; he said that he did not know how much to charge, but that the Government tariff was on the wall, and we could see how much we had to pay by that. Finally, he added up our account with the help of the tariff, and asked for a ludicrously small sum. I took the trouble to copy some of the prices:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Lodging for 'simple folk'	0	1
Room without fire	0	6
'Warmed room,' fire and lights	0	10
Bread and butter and eggs	0	3½
Breakfast, with hot meat, &c.	0	9
Supper	0	9
Dinner	1	0
A cup of tea or coffee	0	2½
Bottle of London Stout	2	0
Ditto sherry	2	0
Ditto claret	2	6
Ditto port	3	0
Food and stabling for horse per diem	0	5½

These prices are certainly not ruinous; but the English are not always lucky enough to be charged

by the tariff. The charge for bed, breakfast, and supper of two people will be two dollars at a grand house, like the Inn at Hönefoss, or Jerkin on the Dovre Fjeld; at others it will be one dollar for precisely the same fare. Now and then one gets a combination of good quarters and an infinitesimal bill, but as a rule the English traveller always pays twice the proper amount. A dinner of reindeer or grouse, some cream-porridge, a bottle or two of beer, and a breakfast consisting of the remains of your dinner with coffee, need not cost anything, except a fee for the trouble of cooking. The whole thing costs the family about a shilling or eighteenpence, and therefore the scale of pay depends entirely on their honesty. No doubt they feel that it is very hard to keep their fingers out of a walking gold-mine.

A farmer's wife in Skeaker once told me that being English I must pay an English price. "Norse folk are poor, English folk are rich, and you shall pay in proportion." I had not the moral courage to pay only what I knew the things were worth, but I made a deduction from the outrageous demand made by her. Swiss innkeepers have the same maxim, and act on it, without much chance of improvement, but

it is a great pity that Norway should be corrupted without the English making an effort to prevent it. I think that our nation is often unjustly accused of snobbish prodigality in poor countries. It very often is no lavish spirit which makes us pay greedy demands, but a great unwillingness to enter into undignified haggling with mean or rough people. If there is undoubted proof that one is being "done," the natives find to their surprise that we can be very stubborn over the smallest trifle. Otherwise it is better not to spoil the pleasure of a tour by constant bargaining.

Bjöberg being a "fast station," is bound to provide six horses for the use of travellers from May 15th to October 15th; it is therefore advisable to take horses from this house to the Fille Fjeld or Hæg without changing on the road. Those who come up Hallingdal, without having been on the Bergen road on previous trips, should not go up the Fille Fjeld at once, but take a three or four days' run to Gudvangen and the Stalheims Cleft, returning by the same road, which is perhaps the most magnificent in Norway. The whole journey might be managed thus.

MILES.		MILES.
28 on 1st day ^f .	{	Christiania to Sundvolden . . . 22
		(Lunch ; views at Krogleven.) to Hönefossen . . . 6
26 on 2nd day.	{	(Sleep at Gladvedt's.)
		Hönefossen to Vehme (filthy station) 7
		thence to Hovland, (very good) 7
46 on 3rd day.	{	thence to Green's house, past Hamremoen . . . 12
		(Good and cheap lodgings.)
		Green's to Sorteberg, hilly road on to Gulsvig . . . 18
		thence by some poor stations to Næs . . . 28
49 on 4th day.	{	(Good lodgings at Meidell's shop.)
		Næs to Tuff, (tolerable) . . 36
39 on 5th day.	{	thence to Bjöberg, (apt to be crowded) . . . 13
		Bjöberg to Hæg, (poorish station) . 16
		Hæg down hills to Leirdalsören . 23
34 on 6th day.	{	(Capital hotel.)
		Row on Sogne Fjord to Gudvangen 8 or 10 hrs., (good inn) . 34
44 on 7th day.	{	Up the Nærodal and back to Leirdal 44
		(A long day.)
31 on 8th day.	{	Leirdal to Maristuen on the Fille Fjeld . . . 31

^f Starting from Drammen the first day's journey would be 36 miles. To Sundvolden along Hals and Tyri Fjord, 30 miles, to Hönefossen 6.

By stopping only at these stations, and resting a Sunday or perhaps two days on the road, a lady may go comfortably through the grandest and most characteristic scenery in the country^s. Some provisions should be taken in the box on starting, but it can be replenished at several places on the road. About halfway between Bjöberg and Hæg is a house called Breistolen, where half-an-hour's rest is allowed to the horses. It is built on a bleak and desolate moor, and must be very uncomfortable as a home. We stood by the kitchen fire while they 'sættede ild i kakkelovnen' (i.e. lit the stove), and wondered at the dirt. The beds were arranged like the berths in a ship, one above the other, and looked comfortable with their sheepskin rugs. In one corner is a spinning-wheel, in another the red and blue family chests. Altogether we got rather reconciled to this fell-house (*fjell-stuer*), which was palatial compared to the hovels near it by the roadside. I do not know if they are dignified by the name of *châlets* or *sæters*. The sleeping accommodation consists of a large cage on one side of the room, or rather a recess built up to the height of

^s For descriptions of this route, vide Chapters VI. VII.

a bed with stones, and partially boarded at the side with planks, through which half-naked children peer out of the straw at the stranger, and where the whole family tumble into the said straw or hay promiscuously at night. Some of these huts are as bad as the worst *châlets* in the Tyrol, or lodgings in a London slum. It is certainly a calumny on the *sæters* to include them in the same class as these unsavoury styes. The word "sty" is used without any contemptuous meaning in Norway, as meaning simply a room, a place to live in : hence the mountain inns are called *fjel'-stuer*. These houses have several important privileges ; they are free of rent and taxes, and used to be furnished with fires and candles and kitchen-gear free of expense, a rate being levied on the neighbouring farmers for their support. Besides Breistolen on the Hemsedal Fjeld, there are two on the Fille Fjeld, to which we are bound, and four on the Dovre Fjeld, viz. Tofte, Jerkin, Fogstuen, and Kongsvold. The first mention of these houses is in the reign of the three sons of Magnus Barefoot, about A.D. 1155. Sigurd the Jerusalem-farer, and his brother Eystein, were in their winter guest-quarters at neighbouring farms,

and met one night to drink ale in the straw by the fire. It was a custom in those days to wile away the time by bragging-matches, to which King Eystein invited his travelled brother. Sigurd was moody and scornful; he had got Jarl Roger his kingdom of Sicily; he had won eight battles: he had been to the Holy Sepulchre, "and you were not there, brother Eystein! and I tied a knot in a twig on Jordan-bank, which awaits you still, brother!" Many other bragging speeches were made by him, but Eystein could beat him in skating on ice-legs (the shin-bones of sheep strapped on as skates and called *is leggiom*), at which the pilgrim was "as slow as a young cow." Eystein was the best on snow-shoes (*skidom*, modern *skier*), but Sigurd bent the strongest bow. At last Eystein won the match by saying, "Over the Dofra-fiall was the fair (crowded road) to Thrandheim. Men died there in bad weather, many fared a grievous journey. I got an inn built there, and gave it an income. Thus men know that there has been a King Eystein in Norway^h."

Near this *fjel^l-stue* of Breistolen is a grim-looking

^h Saga of Sigurd, Eystein, and Olaf.

tarn, something like that by the Grimsel Hospice, shut in by desolate mountains. It is the source of the Hemsedal river, which joins the Hallingdal at the cascades near Næs, and with it flows into the Kröderen lake, and so by Drammen to the Christiania Fjord at last. Another river starts from the Eidre lake and tears down in a long cascade to join the Leirdal river. By descending a tremendous series of zigzags we get at last to the road from Bergen, which we join at the foot of the Fille Fjeld.

CHAPTER VII.

BERGEN.

No one ought to leave Norway without seeing the road between Bergen and the Fille Fjeld. This no doubt is a great reason for landing at Bergen in the first place, which every one would do if the boats were better. The city itself is interesting, and to my mind a ramble to Maristuen, knapsack on back, is well worth a little inconvenience in getting to the starting-point. In my own case the walk was solitary, yet I could not be dull in the presence of such grand scenery, and among so many novelties of all kinds. The coast near Bergen is certainly finer than that of the Christiania Fjord; and we had a good opportunity of looking at the skerries, which act as the natural breakwater to the fjords all along the coast, having raised a subscription to pay the pilot for taking us "inside the islands." These rocks (*skerries*^a) are torn into fantastic shapes by the water, which is very rough in all weathers, while

^a *Skjærrer* (skerries) are columns of rock which act as a breakwater to the coast of Norway. It is said that there are more than a million of them on the west coast. The whole line of them is called the "Skerry-guard."

the entrances to the fjords are as smooth as can be. The sea-fowl breed upon these islets in great numbers, but we did not see many on the summer evening of our arrival. A few auks and puffins were skimming about, with rows of little fish strung across their beaks; and now and then we passed a stack-rock, where cormorants and shags were stretching their wings. The crested shag is often seen here. Pontoppidan calls this bird the loon, a name which it shares with the great crested grebe. The flesh of puffins is not only extensively used as food by the Icelanders, but it is also considered to be the best of bait for codfish. Puffins are in great repute for their feathers in Norway, and also for their flesh in some country parts. Yet if the natives could read what Wecker (quoted in the "Anatomy of Melancholy") says of such food, they would avoid such "melancholic meats:"—"All fenny fowl are forbidden; ducks, geese, and coots, and all those teals, curs, sheldrakes, and peckled fowls that come in winter from Scandia, Greenland, &c., which half the year are covered up with snow. Though these be fair in feathers, pleasant in taste, and of a good outside, like hypocrites, white in plumes and soft, yet

their flesh is hard, black, unwholesome, dangerous, melancholy meat."

But the poor Norwegians, by all accounts, should be the most dejected and gloomy of mortals from the qualities attributed to all their food by doctors in old times. For instance, venison is but a strong and hard-grained meat, "next to horses," and unwholesome, though somewhat pleasant to taste! Milk, and all dairy produce, is bad, except sour whey; (perhaps this accounts for their partiality to *syr-mjolk*); their oat-cakes and rye-bread are said by Galen to be "horse-meat, and fitter for juments than men;" and as for their "home-brewed öl," has not Henricus Abrincensis (in Burton) said "Nil spissius illa," and "multas fæces in corpore linguat," and called it "a monstrous drink, like the river Styx?" The fate of Buscodnese, a Carthusian monk, "of a ruddy colour and well liking," who brought himself to the verge of death by eating fish, ought to be an example to a people who feed on stock-fish, smoked herrings, and salmon; but it does not seem to have affected them, except when they keep up that abominable custom of eating half-gone fish, arrested in mid decomposition by pickling in brine!

Puffin-pie sounds like an abomination, but it is not bad if properly cooked. *Experto crede.* The backbone must be removed, and the bird soaked in water for some hours before cooking it, or it will taste of fish. Many sea-birds are excellent eating, if this precaution is observed. For instance, a cormorant roasted and eaten with cayenne and lemon is nearly as good as a wild duck, and better than a curlew. A fisherman of my acquaintance has often told me that "a fat gull is so good a goose any day^b." I do not personally agree with him, but *chacun a son vilain petit goût.* The Norsemen catch great numbers of these popes, parrots^c, or *lunder*, as they are variously named, and train dogs to go into the holes where the puffin has its nest, lying in it with feet in the air. "The dogs go in and pull out the first they can lay hold of by the wings, where they lie together in scores. When one is laid hold of he biteth fast to his next neighbour, and draws him out

^b This is like what the Faroe islanders say of the young of the "scraper," which is probably the Manx shearwater; they say it is "as fat as a fed goose." This is also the bird which the Norwegians say lies in its burrow, like the puffin, on its back, claws in air.

^c In Iceland the puffin is the *sœ-papagoie*, the sea-popinjay or parrot.

too; and so all are drawn out and killed." I have seen puffins induced to come out and be caught by croaking at the mouth of the hole, but never many together. Pontoppidan says that the little *lund* will catch his enemy the raven by the throat and drown him in the sea. This may be true: at any rate I know of a village in England where the lads set a puffin to fight "the early village cock," and chanticleer got the most disgraceful beating. These birds come to Norway in April and leave it about St. Olaf's Day, their flocks much thinned by the fowlers and egg-hunters. In the Northern provinces the sea-fowl are protected by law from any interference with the Government monopoly of fowling.

The Bergen fjord is about fifteen miles long, and on that night looked lovely in the twilight. The only ripples on the water were made by fishermen looking at their salmon-nets, or rowing back to Bergen. At midnight when we arrived it was light enough to read "Murray" with ease on the deck, and to shew off the fine position of the town, which lies at the feet of seven high mountains^d. This

^d The word Bergen was anciently called Biorg-vin, which explains its derivation, often erroneously stated as merely Bergen,

position is probably the reason of the excessive rains, two days out of three being wet, and nobody moving without umbrellas. The custom-house officers did not detain any of us long, but they were especially speedy with my luggage. They would hardly believe that anybody would come from England with nothing but a knapsack. So it was, however, and it saved an infinite amount of trouble; though one's appearance a few weeks afterwards would have been decidedly improved by having a portmanteau of clothes to meet one on descending from the fells. The "Scandinavie" hotel is very clean and comfortable, so we all scrambled up the hill to it, and had the pleasure of seeing the watchmen meet and salute, singing the psalm, *Nisi Dominus*. Sir A. De Capell Brooke translated the song which the Trondhjem watchmen use instead of this psalm:—

"Ho! the watchman, ho!
The clock has struck (1, &c.)
Praised be the Lord God—
Now it is bed-time.

'the mountains.' *Vijn* means an 'echo,' or a 'resounding-place,' and was often used in the compound names of places: Bjorg-vin is the 'mountain-echo-place,' so called from a remarkable echo which actually exists there.

The housewife and the maid,
The master and the boy,—
The wind is [N. S. E. W.] :
Hallelujah !
Praised be the Lord God ! *Amen.*”

Next day I saw their weapon, now superseded by a sword, the *morgenstjern*, or morning star : this is a globe of iron studded with long spikes, and swung upon a heavy staff. After a regular Scandinavian fish-breakfast, we walked to the chief lions.

The German church is worth a visit, to see the ancient wood-carvings. There is a museum of natural history, and another of Northern antiquities, which contains some old costumes and provincial curiosities of the Bergen province ; among others a girdle with knives for the old-fashioned peasants' duel. Accounts of this rather differ, some saying that each man drove his *tolk-kniv* into a deal board, and all that he could not bury in the wood was tied up with leather. Then they were tied to each other, and fought it out with these short points. Native authorities, however, simply say, that when they were angry they would hook their common belts together, and fight with their knives till one was killed ; “ so

that Chancellor Jens Bjelke wished to stop this brutish custom, and ordered that all men should give up their knives at the end of a dinner-party." Before this a bride was expected to bring a shroud with her, in case her husband was killed at the breakfast. Some unprincipled men, we are told, especially in Leirdal, used to take two tolk-knives. This was hardly consistent with the epithet which the natives claimed for Norway, viz. the most Christian in Christendom!

The duel was called *holm-gang*: *holm* means an island, and thence a 'champ clos' marked out for battle. The *holm-gangs* were forbidden by law in Iceland A.D. 1011.

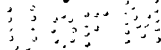
But what can we expect from the descendants of Vikings, whose delight it was to see a captive die "under the erne's claws," *alias*, "to carve the blood-eagle." This was effected by cutting down the spine, turning back the flesh on each side, and pulling out the lungs. The death of Sigurd Slem-bidiákna exceeds even this in brutality. He was a most accomplished man, but as the historian said, "his luck was bad." He was given to two men with whom he had a feud to be tortured, when he had



been caught swimming away from a sea-fight. They broke his legs and flayed him, hung him and beat him to death, while he remained "like a stock or a stone," or only replying to their insults "by singing psalms of David." This reads more like Red Indian life than anything else, and it is hard to imagine the placid Norwegians of our day the lineal descendants of such ruffians! 'The parish beadle' in those days meant the common hangman (*bödull*).

There have been so many derivations given for this word Viking that it may be as well to write down the best. In the first place it has nothing to do with 'king' (*konungr* contracted into *kongr*). 1. The popular derivation given is *viig-kingur* quasi *viig-konungr*, 'the sea-king'; *viig* meaning 'sea.' 2. From *vik*, 'a bay'; *vikingur*, 'bay-men,' 'they who sailed in and out of bays.' 3. *Vigg*, 'a ship' (Old Norsk), which would make *vigg-konungr* 'ship-king,' or *viggingur*, 'men of ships.' 4. The right derivation given by the old Icelandic writers, from *viig*, 'slaughter,' whence came *vikingur*, a 'robber.' 5. Laing derives the word from (2) *vik*, 'a bay,' especially *Vik* the Skagerack Bay *par excellence*.

Bergen was founded by King Olaf Kyrre in 1070,



while Oslo or Opsolo (Christiania) was an insignificant place. It soon became a formidable rival to Drontheim, and several kings were crowned here in Olaf's Church. We read that King Magnus Erlings-son made a great feast in the Konungs-gaard, the palace at Bergen. The great hall was strown with silk and tapestry, and Eystein, the Pope's legate and archbishop, crowned Magnus as king, A.D. 1164. Erling Skacke and the twelve chief *lendsmen* took the oath of allegiance. '*Lehnsmand*' has come to mean a petty provincial magistrate in our time, but it used to be translated *satrap*, or prefect, and meant one of the great barons holding *in capite*, from *lehn*, 'a fief.' They had more power than the *odelsmænder*, or farmers of allodial ground, but these last had many privileges which they would not have changed for "the feudal incidents." In the conversation between Sigurd the Pilgrim and his brother King Eystein about 1118, which was quoted about the mountain-houses in the last chapter, is the first mention of this palace at Bergen. Eystein (which, by the way, is Austin or Augustine) said, "I got a king's hall built at Bergen, and an apostles' church, with a flight of steps between them; whereby they who

come after me should know me. I built St. Michael's Church (in Bergen), a monastery (at Nord-næs, near the town)." This story of Sigurd and his brethren seems to mark the transition to civilized ways from the truculent life of those fire-eaters who went about with their swords, Quern-biter and Leg-cutter, or the great broadsword Bastard, so called in compliment to our King, the bastard of Normandy, "and which did much war-work." Henceforth the Sagas are pitched in a less stormy key.

Bergen owed its first greatness to trading with England, a ship having been sent (according to tradition) so early as the reign of Harold Fair-hair, laden with furs and fish, to barter for honey, cloth, and corn. Hako Hakonson made a treaty with England, which is said to have been the first made by us with any nation. The English and Scotch are also said to have evangelized Norway. It is certain that they settled in considerable numbers in Bergen and Christiansand. Pontoppidan cites a village called Skotte-bye, or Scotch-farm. He also says that the *bonders* near Bergen, who from their peculiar dress are called *strile-bönder*, are of Scotch extraction.

King Olaf Tryggvason certainly owed *his* conversion to us, being talked over and baptized by a certain hermit of the Scilly Islands (*Syllinga öer*), whom he visited, thinking to find a wizard.

The story of Harald's ship is confirmed by a speech made by King Sverre in A.D. 1186 at Bergen, to this effect:—

“Thacka viliom öllum Enskom
mönnum, er hingát flytia
hveiti oc hunáng, flúr oc
kleidi. Sva viliom thacka
them, mönnum öllum er hingát
hafa flutt lerept eda lín
vax eda ketla.”

We thank willingly all English
men, who have hither brought wheat-flour,
and honey, meal and clothes.
So willingly we thank
all those men who hither have brought
linen or flax,
wax or kettles.

He goes on to say, that he wishes all German traders would leave Bergen unvisited (*Thydverska* is the modern *Tydsk*, German), and not bring their stores of butter and stockfish, for they introduced drunkenness, and all the five evils that come from it. This English trade went on till the middle of the

fifteenth century, when the Hanse merchants obtained a monopoly of trade, the evil effects of which are still apparent. The Hanseatic League lost the monopoly about a hundred years ago, but most of the families in Bergen are of German extraction, and are noted for their thrift and 'management.'

Drunkenness has been the bane of this place from the days of Sverre to our time, and is supposed to have been the chief cause of the leprosy which prevails in these parts. Drinking bad spirits, with filthy habits, especially one of eating half-rotten fish, spread it abroad. This state of things, and the increasing drunkenness among the peasants, led to the introduction of a modified Maine liquor law all over Norway. By it the sale of spirits is prohibited to all except licensed dealers in towns. This prevents the country people from buying it, except on rare occasions. But of course it is often evaded in practice, like all other "Blue laws." The farmers go once or twice a-year to lay in their store of *aquavit*, *spiritus*, *finkel*, and so on; and it is not forbidden to make a present of some to any one who wants it. The sale thus becomes an affair of barter or civility, without going through the formalities

(usual in the state of Maine) of "going to see the striped pig," or "to enquire after the baby." Sometimes the peasants are very conscientious, and will not sell or give a drop of spirits for love or money, which is hard on the tired traveller; at other times you may take what you want, but I never knew them make any charge for it, though the bill may have been swelled on its account in another item. The Norwegians still want a little improvement in the matter of drink, though I believe they are better than the Swedes. These latter are being regenerated (I hear) by the introduction of Barclay and Perkins' porter into Stockholm at a cheap rate. The form of leprosy to which the Norwegians are subject is elephantiasis, which is said to have been common also in England in the days of woollen and leather clothes and bad food. Every one recollects King Bladud's leprosy, and his fortunate visit to Bath with his sick pigs. The Bath waters were always considered a special cure for leprosy and elephantiasis, so that the Norwegian doctors might import or manufacture a similar remedy for their patients. At any rate, it would be worth trying.

There is a large hospital or lazaretto at Molde as

well as in Bergen, but they cannot help the patients very much, the disease generally being constitutional, and derived from the parents. Bergen altogether is considered a most unhealthy place, from the continual damp, while Christiansand has the name of being the healthiest.

In the afternoon we went through the Gammel Strand, the chief street, and examined the silversmiths' windows. We saw some fine old silver cups and ornaments, and one of the bride's crowns of gilt pasteboard, which honest maids in the Bergen-stift wear at their weddings. The dancing goes on at the bridegroom's house till the bride pulls out a long pin from her crown, which held it together. It is considered rude to stay for another "Polsk-dance," after actually "dancing the bride's crown off her head." Near the Exchange, with the quaint old German houses ° crammed with odoriferous stock-fish and casks of cod liver oil, is the fish-market. The bringing of fish out of the *jagts*, vessels with high prows and enormous square sails, of the most primitive build, is accompanied with a prodigious cursing and swearing, made more discordant by

° This is still called "the German quarter" of Bergen.

the shrill scolding of the fish-wives. There were congers and hake, wrasse of many colours (a coarse and watery fish, which is scorned even by the hardy Norsemen), and sea-bream. Flounders are caught here in great numbers, but we saw none like that splendid fish described in Bartholinus: "In 1650 was caught at Bergen a sparrow-fish (flounder) marked with the sign of a cross most perfectly designed. It was brought to the kitchen of Dominus Jan Schelderup, Bishop of Bergen, my kinsman, as a mark of respect; but the cook-maid was frightened when she saw the cross, and refrained her knife, and reserved the illustrious fish to be gazed upon by the crowd." The *jagts* bring in ling, cod, and halibut from their deep-sea expeditions, and occasionally congers. The derivation of "ling" appears in its Norwegian name of *lange*, or 'long codfish.' The word for halibut (or, as our fishermen more correctly pronounce the word, holy-but) is *helle-flynder*, 'holy flatfish.' It shares this name with plaice and turbot, but has a peculiar name of *queite* to itself. The fishermen say that they sometimes catch halibuts with eagle's or osprey's claws rooted in their backs, the rest of the bird having been dragged down by

the great fish and rotted off under the water. It is certain that eagles have been drowned by salmon in this way, and at the beginning of this chapter the puffin was accused of playing a similar trick on "the raven, his enemy."

The gay season of Bergen is in April, when the fleet of *jagts* returns from the cod-fishery in the Lofoden Islands. This town, as well as those further north, depends greatly on the herring-fishery. The winter is the season for the Bergen herring-fishery, which begins in January and lasts about three months. Further north they come in large shoals, pursued by whales and all manner of birds, to the Trondhjem coast about June, according to Mr. Mitchell¹; some of the herrings caught in the northern provinces are of a very great size, especially those from Christian-sand, which are often more than a foot long (the *stor-sild*). Of late the Lofoden fishery of herrings has almost ceased.

The time of the fish arriving near Bergen has not changed for many hundred years, there being an old proverb which enjoins the watchers to look out about Twelfth-day for the rorquals and grampuses pursuing

¹ Natural History of the herring.

the herrings, or "hill of herrings," as they call a shoal:—

"Sidst i Torre og først i Gjo
Skal sild oc hval være i siö."

The last of Torre and first of Gio
Shall herring and whale be in the sea.

Torre being the month beginning with Christmas, or in heathen times with the *mids-vestrar blöt* or Thorre's *blöt*, the midwinter or Thorre's sacrifice. Resenius says that there was a king of "Qvainland" called Thorre (meaning 'bold') who gave his name to the month.

Gio is the month following Torre: the name is probably derived from the same root as *gjöla*, 'cold,' *giöst*, 'a cold wind.'

The appliances of civilization and the Government interest in this fishery have made a wonderful difference in the value of the fish to the Norwegians. About one hundred years ago a fisherman shut up in his 'lock-net' a vast quantity of fish in a small bay; a citizen of Bergen, we are told, bought eighty jagt-loads for about £12 and a cask of brandy. The same thing happened the other day, and according to Mr. Mitchell the catch was sold for £5,000!

This fishery is often mentioned in the Sagas; in the reigns of Harald Grafeld and Olaf Tryggvason famines were warded off by the coming of larger shoals of herrings than usual. St. Olaf, the next king, forbade herrings to be sent away from Vik (the coast near Bergen), since they were the staff of life. The Skald Eyvind Skaldaspillir wrote a song about them, which has been translated already rather inaccurately. He had been singing round about the farms in Iceland, and so charmed them that each man gave him "iii. silfrs peninga," three silver pennies, which were all melted and worked into a cloak-brooch. Eyvind went out herring-fishing when the dearth came, but had no luck, so that he had to sell his fine brooch and all his goods down to his bow and arrows for fish. Eyvind sings:—

"Let us make lake-horse^a
 with foot tread the sea
 to the north to the fork-tailed^b
 magic maids^c of our long nets.
 We shall see if my friends
 will have for sale

^a Ship—*lák-fóta*.

^b The herrings.

^c *Spá-thernum*, prophet-waiting maids.

the gifts of my arrows ^k,
 which the excellent sea-hogs ^l
 toss up.
 I got a row of cloak-clasps ^m
 which the ports-men
 of the heaven of ocean ⁿ
 send out to me,
 and I sold it
 for the herd of the fjord.
 A great brooch
 and the swift herrings ^o
 of my taut bowstring
 for the sea's arrows ^p
 I sold.
 Dearth causes all things."

The shoals are followed by sharks of various kinds (the haw-fish, *haae-fisk*) and herring-whales. The fox-shark is occasionally seen by the herring-fishers, which on account of its tail being as long as its body they call the sea-rat. The blue shark, "yellow haw-fish" or robin huss, and dogfish are all common, nor are sword-fish and saw-fish rarer than on

^k Reading *akar-mutar*, and understanding 'the fish bought with the proceeds of his arrows.'

^l Either porpoises or boats.

^m *Fell-stingá*, i.e. 'brooch.' Fell is the skin of a beast; hence a skin-cloak.

ⁿ The Icelanders, who live amid ice, the blue heaven of the sea.

^o Arrows.

^p Herrings.

our own Cornish coast, where they sometimes frighten the boatmen fishing for pollack and bræm. Besides the fish common in England, they catch the cat-fish (chiefly found in the Gulf of Bothnia) and the frog-fish. The lobster trade with England is enormous, and a regular line of packets is established to supply the London market. I do not know if the fishermen still keep up their old superstition of giant lobsters in the Bay of Udvær, where they were seen (according to credible witnesses) so large that their claws were a fathom apart! The fishermen allowed that they had always seen them when hidden in the long oar-weed, and only shewing their claws, and were ready to swear that they were too frightened to stop and find out their real size.

This story is a fit pendant to those of the krake and sea-snake, which likewise rest on the authority of Norwegian fishermen, and which we will mention at another time. In the harbour I noticed several kinds of gulls, the glaucous, the common herring-gull, the large black-backs or saddle-backs, and the graceful little kittiewakes. At the entrance to the Fjord we were amused at seeing a *skua*, or robber-gull, exercising his nefarious trade, by chasing any smaller

bird who had caught a fish, and catching it as it was falling into the water. One of the hills overlooking Bergen Bay is used as a weathercock by the natives ; when it has clouds upon its head, which is nearly always, they expect dirty weather. Though it is nearly always raining in this town, I believe that there are other places similarly hemmed in by mountains which are just as wet. Professor Forbes mentions Talmezzo in the South-eastern Alps as a parallel to Bergen in the matter of wet weather.

CHAPTER VIII.

UP THE DALE FJORD.

NOTWITHSTANDING the cap of clouds on the weathercock hill, I determined to leave Bergen without delay, strapped on my knapsack, lit my pipe, and began my journey to the fells alone, and without knowing a word of the language. Murray's little vocabulary is of great use in such a case, but it is best to have a little conversation-book of Danish and English, such as 'Lund's' (sold by Thimm, 3, Brook-street, Grosvenor-square). The only thing in Murray which misleads beginners is a mistaken direction to pronounce words in Norsk as they are written. Nothing could be more wrong than this, but practice soon helps one to pick up the right way of speaking. Many words are not pronounced at all as they are written, owing to the prevalent habit of leaving out *d* in the middle of a word, and pronouncing *sk* as *sh*. Thus *skyds* is pronounced *shüss*, almost *shees*, and *skyds jordet* becomes *shee-shu-reh*. There are some words which the English are supposed to be unable to master in any length of

time; such is the familiar name *Ole*, which is pronounced *oör-lä*, very short and quick. A common puzzle is *en halv kalv*, which is sounded like *en harrëv karrëv*. *Hvad*, 'what,' sounds as if it were written *quah*, and *quah sey* represents *hvad siger de*, 'what do you say?' The chief fault of English people speaking Norsk is in the pronunciation of the vowels; we make no distinction (according to the Norwegians) between *a* and *e*. Their double *a* is sounded like our *oa* in 'broad,' and their double *e* like *ai* in 'pain,' and sometimes is made into a diphthong (*ai*) by the peasants.

The road from Bergen to Lone is skirted by pretty villas belonging to the merchants: every house had a pretty flower-garden and a swing, and the ponds were covered with water-lilies, so that one could hardly believe that before night one would be in a black and sombre desert. The hotel in the Cloisters had been so agreeable that I was hardly prepared for the filth of the first station, only seven miles away. A dirty peasant in reply to my signs and attempts to coin a request for food out of Murray, rushed out and brought back a slice of smoked salmon squeezed up in his black hand, which he

deposited with a yard of *fladbröd* on the equally dirty table. I was glad to give it to the dog when he was not looking, and go on to Garnæs. This is a neat little place on the Dale Fjord, on which there is a long boat-stage to Dale. No one ought to leave Bergen without food enough for a day and a half, for there is no place before Bolstadören where anything can be bought, except perhaps a couple of eggs at Garnæs. Near Garnæs I was much importuned by two "roughs" to hand over my cotton money-bag, which I had incautiously produced. There was a little hut near the roadside where I stopped to enquire the way, and where these fellows were lying on a bed. They asked me to buy them some *öl* from the woman of the house, a bitter muddy drink not yet quite expelled from the outlying districts by the Bavarian beer, or *bayersk*. On seeing the abundance of shillings and small change in my bag, they volunteered to act as guides, but led me into a wood, which my map clearly shewed was not on the road to Garnæs. Accordingly we all "rightabout-faced," and they began to guide me in the opposite direction, or rather to follow very close on my heels. At last

after many demands for *skillinge! skillinge!* they both simultaneously drew their talk-knives and menaced rather seriously. On being shewn a large deerstalking knife which I had in my pocket, there was a ridiculous pause, and then an abrupt "ske-daddle breakdown" on the part of my acquaintances. Such instances are I believe of the rarest possible occurrence in Norway, where the people are, as a rule, most civil and honest: this part of the country, however, has the worst repute, from its nearness to Bergen and the corrupting influences of foreign sailors. I never heard of any robbery committed on an Englishman, though last year a German was murdered on an island near Christiania for his pocket-book. The villains were determined to do their work well; they strangled, drowned, stabbed, and shot the poor man, and then went to Zealand. We came over in the boat on which they were conveyed back from Copenhagen to Christiania, and thought that we had seldom seen such puny little rascals. A big police-officer took them off in a special steamer, when we were a few miles from Christiania, that they might avoid the yelling mob, through which we had to drag fright-

ened ladies on our arrival that night. As there was no doubt of their guilt, I enquired on what day they would probably be convicted and afterwards executed. I was told that the trial would take several months, and that after their conviction six more months would be allowed them "to make their souls." After all, they might escape the penalty of the headsman's block by a commutation of their sentence to "slaveri," or penal servitude for life. There is a great objection to capital punishment in all the Baltic countries, where it is common to hear great horror expressed both at the number of murders in England and our public system of execution. On the whole, perhaps, our system is as pleasant to the culprits as theirs can be. At any rate, I recollect a Finn, who had been abusing our plan and extolling the mercy of exile to Siberia, suddenly adding, conscience-smitten, "But, you know, of course they don't get much attention paid to them, and so they mostly die on the road."

The Dale Fjord is gloomy, but very grand, especially near the Island of Osteröen, under the steep side of which we pass. There are waterfalls shooting over the cliffs in all directions. I was

in a boat with six rowers, two of whom were volunteers, having asked leave to work their passage to Dalseidet. Notwithstanding this addition to our forces, it took us from 8 P.M. to 2 A.M. to reach the miserable huts of Dale. I was too tired and wet to dispute any claim the boatmen might have put forward for increase of pay, but these honest fellows were content with the smallest *drikkepenge* in addition to the Government charge, though I left them on a wet night so far from their home. The peasants have to take it in turns to row the boats for travellers on the fiords, and, very properly, will not generally go out of their turn, except for increased pay. This is often represented as a grievance by passengers who are in a hurry and see a number of men waiting idly till the proper *baad-karler* arrive. An old man in a blue wadmél suit and "red cap of liberty" shewed me into the guest-room, which was fuller of obnoxious insects than I have ever seen in any other in Norway. The bed was impossible after two minutes, so I slept on the table with the help of my macintosh cape and knapsack. No one should go far on foot in this country without a cape of this sort. A coat is too cumber-

some, unless it is so thin as to be useless, while a rough cape makes a capital bed if the floor be wet or muddy, and in rainy weather can be worn over the knapsack, which cannot well be done with a coat. I did not see the primitive candlestick, which some traveller described, who dropped into Dale when a wedding-feast was going on. It was merely a bowl heaped up with butter, in which was stuck a lighted tallow candle. With praiseworthy economy, the guests took their butter from the edge of this candlestick, scraping off any superfluous tallow with their talk-knives.

In the morning, after performing a scant toilet to the admiration of the boys and girls who crowded to the door, I made acquaintance with sour milk, *fladbröd* and *gammel ost*, which was all that could be got for breakfast. These peculiarly Norwegian luxuries were not charged very heavily in the bill, the old man being very grateful for a mark (10d.) for bed and board. I believe that one or two rooms in this house have since been fitted up by an English gentleman, who wished to fish the river. When I was there I heard that there were a good many salmon, but that few people would stop more than

a few hours at the miserable station. I had been prepared for grand scenery between this place and Dalseidet, and was not disappointed, though I had seen some monstrous exaggerations of "this pass^a," in the drawings of a gentleman whose mind appears to have been excited or unstrung by fictitious terrors;—"More than once I started when the gusts of wind rustled through the forest, (!) for I had been apprised that the bear and the wolf harboured there!" If there were even one bear or wolf per annum seen in "this pass, which only a culminating sun can penetrate," the stations would be crowded with sportsmen; but the wolves still keep in the bleakest fells, and the bears in the most remote glens, and the tourist need never be in terror of wild beasts by night or day. The Norwegians laugh heartily at the English for believing that the country is as full of bears as Spitzbergen, where the white bruin put his arm in at the window and scalped the Russian playing draughts with his mate. Without any special awe or terror I enjoyed the walk very much, stopping to wash some clothes at a brook and taking a bath in the

^a Price's Sketches of Norway.

midst of it. At Dalseidet is another boat-station, there being no road round the Bolstad Fjord, and here I was pleased to fall in with my amateur rowers of the night before. We shook hands, and all started together in a boat pulled by an old man and his wife. Dalseidet is about six miles from Dale, at the head of the other fiord^b.

^b The Sönden Oster Fjord.

CHAPTER IX.

VOSSEVANGEN AND THE NÄRO DAL.

THE Bolstad Fjord is remarkable for its cliffs, which literally overhang the water, and in many parts have fallen into it, leaving slopes of *débris*, on which grass grows in profusion. The haymakers are rowed to the base, the only accessible side, and take back their hay in the same way. One of these land-slips, or *bergraper*, must be a fine sight, though the natives do not think so. "It has all the appearance of a prelude to the end of the world," says one. The sides of the rock are so precipitous that the telegraph wires are nailed into them, there being no space for poles. The telegraph line is kept up from Bergen to Christiania over the Fille Fjeld, though communication is often interrupted from accidents happening in lonely places, especially in such positions as the cliffs of a long desolate fjord. There is usually a little cavity, or cupboard, made in each of the poles, in which is kept a piece of vitriol, with which to restore the coating of copper when the wire is injured.

At the other end of the Bolstad Fjord is Bolstad itself, which is one day's journey from Bergen for people who do not walk. It is a sort of watering-place to the Bergen merchants, who come here early in summer and make the fjord gay with boating and picnics. Between this and Evanger the road leads by the Rundals river, well spoken of for salmon, and famous in the Sagas. King Sverre was driven back by the warlike men of Voss (in which parish we now are) along the banks of this Rundals river and over the fells which skirt it, the ancient Raud Fjeld, into Hallingdal. His path is still shewn over the mountains, and the memory of his bold and difficult exploit preserved. There is not very much worthy of notice from Evanger to Vossevangen, the scenery being pretty rather than grand, and suffering immensely by comparison to the ravine of Dale. I still kept company with my two Norsk friends, and was getting the names of all sorts of things from them for my note-book, while they on their part asked for the English words. In this way I got the Norsk for all the birds, plants, and household-gear which we passed on the road. What expressive names they have, especially those of the birds! Thus

the wagtail is *elve-kongen*, or 'king of the rivers,' and *quick-stiert*. *Stiert* is our obsolete 'start,' the tail, from whence are derived red-start (Norw., *blöd-stiert*) and clubstart, the old-fashioned name for a stoat and a fish, now metamorphosed into lobster. Both got their names from the knot or club at the end of their tail, and even now it is said that farmers in England complain of the 'lobsters' sucking the eggs and killing the chickens. There is another king of the rivers in Norway, viz. the waterouzel. The *ring erle* and *vip-stiert*, i.e. bob-tail, are other names for our wagtail. The snipe is 'long-nose' (*langsnabel*), as well as *sneppe*, *sneppe* itself meaning snout, and the form *snop* being chiefly used in old Norse for a horse's nose. Woodpeckers are 'tree-hackers and pickers,' or Gertrud's birds. The nightjar, or goat-sucker, has a plurality of names almost in every country; in Norway he is rich in them, being called *roskog*, or rock-gowk (from its resembling a gowk, or cuckoo, and living in holes of the rocks like a stoat), fog-bird, ground-goat, and night-waker. Another little bird is called the *nord-vind-pibe*, because it pipes only when the north wind is coming, according to the Norwegian writers. In this way

discussing names and things in a broken fashion, we arrived at Vossevangen, where I gave the peasants some beer, and said "Farvel!" This is a neat village on the bank of the Vangs lake, opposite some bleak snow-mountains^a. The fishing is said to be good hereabouts. The landlord had just killed a large salmon by trawling from a boat up and down the lake when I arrived. The inn kept by Mr. Jer-sin is very clean and comfortable; it has been long established owing to the numbers of visitors to this place *en route* for Stalheimsleift, the Vöring Foss, and the Hardanger Fjeld. I have seen many enthusiastic accounts of this waterfall, the highest in Norway, and of which it is so hard to get a view, but no higher compliment than was paid to it by a French gentleman, who crossed with us to Bergen. When we were opposite the entrance of the Hardanger Fjord he became very much excited, and cried, "I am coming near it! I am coming near! for thirty years I dream of Vöring Foss!" In the spring of A.D. 1023 King Olaf the Saint came to

^a Professor Forbes noticed that the snow-level on these hills is extraordinarily low compared with that of the Fille Fjeld and Dovre Fjeld.

Vossevangen, having heard that the people were still heathens against his orders. He summoned a "Thing," to which all the bonders came with all their arms. Olaf bade them become Christians on the spot, but they murmured, and drew up in line of battle against the King's men. On that a panic seems to have seized the usually ferocious "Vorsar," or men of Voss, and not one would blow the horn or raise the standard. At last they submitted to the King, who stayed about this part in "guest-quarters" till the end of the summer, when he considered them educated enough in religion, and went over the Fille Fjeld into Valders.

From Vossevangen to Tvinde is a pleasant walk, in the course of which a bridge is passed, under which the river pours into a deep hole with a tremendous noise; and near the station is a really fine waterfall, shooting out on three sides as the column of water strikes the rock. Tvinde, Vinje, and Stalheim are all miserable stations, not meant for anything beyond a change of horses. I managed, however, to get an egg and some rye-bread at Vinje for dinner. Stalheim is a larger house, holding a huge family of boys, who came out to admire my neck-ring, boots,

and knife, three possessions which never failed to be admired. I walked for a little while with some students on a holiday ramble, and talked about the state of literature in Norway. They said that English books were read far more than any others, and that people who do not know English read our books in translations, which I could well believe after seeing a circulating library at Bergen full of Walter Scott and Dickens. Most people of any education here speak or read a little English; many from visiting Hull and other places in the north of England to learn book-keeping, others because they must learn either English or German at school and college. These students were reading "Bleak House," which they seemed highly to enjoy. "David Copperfield" they liked, "because it was so funny;" but "Pickwick" was "much too dull." I suppose that the idiomatic wit of Sam Weller is a mystery to all foreigners. Another objection was raised by one student against "Pickwick," viz. that "it was not true," which looked as if they accepted all the other novels of Dickens as true pictures of ordinary English life. Thackeray's books are not nearly so popular. I was much surprised to find that they

hardly knew their names. I met one Norwegian who had read "Adam Bede," and had the good sense to be very much struck by its extraordinary power. "Jane Eyre" is still as popular in Norway as in all other European countries, being translated, reviewed, and acted upon the stage at Bergen and Christiania. A gentleman, with whom I walked in Romsdal, said that English poetry is very much read here, especially Scott and Byron; but that Tennyson had not yet penetrated to the libraries. He promised to get the "Idylls of the King" from England, to see what "this new poet might be like." Also some of Hallam's works, which he had not heard about. In the course of conversation he praised Lord Macaulay's History, oddly enough, for its great impartiality!

The evening was very still and clear when we got to the famous Stalheimsleft, and began to descend the series of zigzags down which the steep road runs. The gorge from Gudvangen to Stalheim is said to be the most Norwegian bit of Norway. Bare cliffs rise on each side, sometimes to four or five thousand feet; and near the wall of hill, which abruptly shuts up the end towards Stal-

heim, towers the great mountain, Jordals-nyten^b. This gigantic cone of felspar is said to have a curious cavern high up in the side, which good climbers can reach; but I do not know why any one ever should have made the attempt. On each side of the steep zigzag road is a high waterfall, one of which, the Sevre Foss, is seven hundred feet high. It is much more striking than the Keel Foss opposite the inn at Gudvangen, which is two thousand feet high, and the highest fall in Europe. The body of water is so small that it is lost in air soon after leaping from the cliff. The road skirts the torrent from these waterfalls till it enters the Næro Fjord. In many places a *bergrap*, or 'rock-slip,' has heaped masses of boulders and crags on both sides of the way. I found Gudvangen a tolerably comfortable place, but travellers should push on

^b *Nyt*, or *nyp*, means a dome-shaped mountain-top. *Knup*, or *nyp*, is our 'knob.' A Norwegian author thus describes it:—"The vast masses of felspar in savage loneliness tower aloft, surrounding an enormous rocky cone that, like a giant turned to stone, seems to shut out the pass before us. This is the Jordalsnyt, which, steep and inaccessible for more than 3,000 (Norwegian) feet, falls down to the deep and terrible valley of Næro-dal. Did Thor, wishing to attack his enemies in the Giant Mountains, break asunder with his hammer these masses of rock," &c.

as soon as they can to Leirdalsören. Opinions differ very much about this inn. It has improved lately in the matter of provisions, but is still very dear. The six-oared boat to Leirdal costs 3 sp. 1 mk., or about fourteen shillings English. Ten or twelve hours is not too much to allow for this row. The mountains rise perpendicularly out of this "narrow firth," which is merely a continuation of the gorge of Stalheim, so that the water is quite calm and black with their shadows. It is more than a hundred miles from here to the open sea, so that the water on the surface of the fjord is only brackish. If it be stirred, however, or dipped up in a bucket, it will be found to be much salter.

The monotonous songs of the boatmen make the scene appear more strange and still to the Englishman smoking on a heap of branches. Sometimes we passed a waterfall waving out like a flag; sometimes the osprey screamed above us, or a raven barked on his ledge. We soon get into the Aurland's Fjord, at the head of which many people are glad to pass several weeks in the pleasant village of Aurland. This part of the Sogne Fjord is the scene of the Frithiof's Saga, which tells us how, not far

from Aurland, the temple of Baldur was burned by Frithiof. Frithiof was the son of a great bonder, and aspired to the hand of Ingebjorga, the sister of the two kings who drove him from Norway. When the formidable Frithiof had gone off on a viking-cruise, our old acquaintance King Hringe, of Hringe-riget, came forward to woo Ingebjorga, and gained the consent of her brothers. Hringe set sorcerers to work to send storms against Frithiof's ship, but in vain; he returned and found that his house had been burned. He therefore sailed up the Sogne Fjord to the temple of Baldur, where the kings were offering a sacrifice, and burned the temple after destroying their ships, so that he got away without being pursued. Frithiof afterwards paid a visit to Hringe's house, where he was feasting with Ingebjorga, now his queen, at the Jule-tide, knowing that even an enemy was secure at that time if he came as a guest. The King swore on the boar's head to conquer the Viking :—

“Sæ hjalpi meir Treyr og Niordur og hinn helgi As.”

But on Frithiof uncovering his face, peace is made, and the Viking remains as the Christmas guest of his old love.

Near here also is supposed to have lived "Orn, 'the Eagle,' a man of great authority among the "Fjord-folk," whose son Ingulf was the first settler in Iceland, and whose cousin Biarni was one of the bold crew who discovered Newfoundland and Labrador, if we may trust the much-questioned Saga interpolated in the *Heimskringla*. From him one of the chief families in Iceland took their motto, *Fides instar Aquilæ*, which was made famous in the North by the learning of the Rev. Arngrim Jonas, historian and antiquary, and a descendant of Ingulf:—

"Euge! Arngrime decus perenne terræ
Cui nomen *glacies et algor* olim °
Cœli, non animi tulit politi!"

There are many tall *bauta* stones, or *cippi*, marking the sites of graves and battle-fields in the neighbourhood.

"The Næroens Fjord and Aurlands Fjord (says Barrow) form one large lake, enclosed between mountains of great picturesque beauty, some of them rising perpendicularly to the stupendous height of 4,600, and sometimes 5,400 feet."

While the men stopped to rest at the village of

° An allusion to *grimr*, 'savage,' 'grim,' and *gryma*, 'frosty-night.'

Fronningen, I was interested in watching some salmon caught in a trap. A man stood as "look-out," like the "huers" in Cornwall who give notice of the pilchards arriving. He was on a high wooden platform overlooking the water, and below him was the trap. When he saw fish swimming over the net he gave the signal to the others to jerk it up and catch the salmon in a box.

I was glad to get to the neat town of Leirdal, a military station, which looked quite gay as the militia-men marched up and down in their blue uniform with red facings. I talked to many of the soldiers last year, and they all knew that they were likely to get into a quarrel with the Tydsklanders, and were all anxious to help the Danes when the emergency should arise. Some of the officers were lodging in the hotel (where, by the way, there is excellent champagne and claret): they were amused at my wish to see the rugged part of the country, and recommended the Jotun Fjeld for a ramble. The Justedal glaciers are within tolerably easy reach of Leirdal, but at that time I was anxious to push on, having perhaps an exaggerated idea of the beauty of the Fille Fjeld. However, I had quite enough

of snow and ice in a few days. A little to the north-east of Leirdal is the difficult pass of Vettie-giel, through which a good walker can make his way to the Hurungerne mountains and the Ymes Fjeld without ever going to the Fille Fjeld at all. He would have to take a great deal of provisions, as he would hardly be able to get any on his journey, which would take several days to accomplish. A snow-slope has to be passed in one part, beyond the last farm of Vettie-giel. A Norwegian clergyman says, that "for three miles the path was on the brink of a perfect abyss, over heaps of snow and masses of ice^d." Lieutenant Breton, who went through it some years ago, says that there are no such extraordinary difficulties, but that the scenery was hardly worth the trouble of the expedition. Perhaps the worthy pastor was of a puffy and a nervous temperament. This valley is the scene of the "Dead Man's Ride," so often mentioned by travellers. When any one died in this valley he could not be carried along the narrow paths, but was mounted on a horse's back, and his legs tied under the belly, and thus rode in his own funeral

^d Breton.

procession. In another part of the Sogne Fjord corpses have to be lowered with ropes from the farm-houses perched on the ledges of the rocks, to which there is no horse-path, but in some places only a pathway or bridge nailed to the rock, like that famous one which King Swerre made of iron and wood and clamped to the rocks for his army to pass over on his way to Waas.

When any one dies in winter at a house in Vetti-giel, the body is kept in salt or ice till the weather is favourable for burying it at the church in Fortunsdal. After leaving Leirdal the road passes through scenery growing rapidly bolder and gloomier, with much snow on the hills relieved by black pinewood in the foreground. In one place between Lysne and Husum the road is blasted in parts, and in parts carried through a channel which the Leirdals river bored in the rock ages ago, when its stream was 100 ft. higher than it is now. The sides of the cleft are much marked and rounded by old water-action. The ascent of the Fille Fjeld is now becoming severe for horses, though the dangerous road, which was unsafe for man or beast, has been cut into a flight of zigzags in the same way

as the abrupt descent of 800 ft. into the Stalheims cleft. The road hangs high above the river, which occupies all the narrow space between the sides of the hills, so that we are obliged to cross the steep elbow of the mountain. One can look over into the water as if from a balcony hundreds of feet high. After the zigzags comes a piece of tolerably level road, by the side of which is Borgund Church, said to be the oldest building in Norway. It has been often described, and there was a model of it in the last Exhibition; it is of a fantastic shape, which the authorities call German Romanesque. To me it looked very like a wooden pagoda. It has a double row of cloisters running round it in an irregular shape: "its nave measures 39 ft., the circular apse 15 + 54." The King of Prussia bought a church like this which was at Leirdalsören; he gave £20 for it as a curiosity, and put it up somewhere in Silesia. There is another (as the guide-books tell us) at Hitterdal, a pleasant place within a little steamer-trip from Christiania. I hardly know if Borgund Church is considered older than the house in Gudbrandsdal in which St. Olaf was born. They

appear to belong to the same date, i. e. the beginning of the eleventh century.

The road continues level on the whole as far as Hæg, which is a poor station near a fine waterfall. Hæg is the locale of a story told in the last century, of a man who was entombed as he walked on the road by the fall of enormous masses of rock from the cliff. His friends could not move the stones but could insert food on poles, by which he was kept alive for some time, but killed at last by the fall of more rocks, or the shifting of those which had shut him in. The houses are very primitive both here and at the turning up to the Hemsedal and Hallingdal road. Here the last ascent of the Fille Fjeld begins; it is very easy now the Government has constructed a road worthy of Brant Önund the Roadmaker, who was so useful to Odin and his family. There is a picture in Pontoppidan's book of "the galleries, a dangerous way under the mountain Filefield," which gives a tremendous idea of the path cut along the face of a cliff, and then led across the huge blocks in the river over the frailest of bridges, where no one could have taken a cart, had they so desired. The enormous rocks in the

river's bed mark the place which had this bad reputation. Except by them you will find it hard to shew any remains of a bad road from Leirdal to the top of the plateau. There are several fine cascades of the Leirdal river on this stage, especially one which cannot be seen from the road. A very good view of it is got from a bridge which leads to some cottages at the foot of the cliff on the other side. It was this bit of road, I suspect, which was so terribly bad in former times. If so, it crossed the river here and continued on the other side, while instead of the present road a path was cut in the edge of a precipitous hill overhanging the river.

CHAPTER X.

AN ARMY OF LEMMINGS.

THE first time that I visited the Fille Fjeld was in a "lemming-year," and the road was crowded with these curious creatures. They are not unlike little guinea-pigs, being of an orange-tawny colour with black bands and spots, with a tail about half an inch long. Their whole length is about five inches, which is much greater than that of the Siberian lemming. Those average a little more than three inches. The home of the lemmings is in Lapland, on the borders of Norway and Sweden, which becoming over-stocked, disgorges a large swarm of them; this happens every four or five years, and it is said that the most enormous swarms come every twenty years. In the intervals they are scarce, though not entirely absent from their old haunts, as is sometimes said. Some may be found any summer on the moors round Stor-hattan, a mountain in Romsdal, to give one instance out of a great many. The army of lemmings marches towards the west, losing immense numbers daily on their line of march, in battle with men,

hawks, and owls. The peasants kill as many as they can, on account of the damage done by them to the green crops. An army of lemmings is almost as bad as a flight of locusts, if we may judge by the special services which in old days were held on their account. It reminds one of the litanies put up against the Huns and Tartars in all the churches from Bremen to Palermo,—

“Ab Ungarorum libera nos jaculis!”

The exorcism against this plague of rats has often been quoted before, but I dare say some of my readers may not have seen it:—

“Exorcizo vos, pestiferos mures, per Deum Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, (+) ut confestim recedatis ab his campis, vineis, aquis, nec amplius in eis habitatis, sed ad ea loca transeatis, in quibus nemini nocere possitis: et ex parte Dei, Omnipotentis, Patris + Filii + et Spiritus Sancti (+) et totius Curie Cœlestis, et Ecclesie Sanctæ Dei, vos maledicens quocunque ieritis, sitis maledicti, deficientes de die in diem, et decrescentes quâtenus reliquæ de vobis nullæ inveniantur. Quod præstare dignetur qui venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos per ignem. Amen.”

This curse is first given by Olaus Wormius, and is quoted in Pontoppidan's "Natural History." We may "do it into English" thus:—

"I ban ye, pestilent rats, in the name of the Holy Trinity! (*signs the cross.*)

Haste away then from these our fields, vineyards, and waters.
March thither where ye are no man's bane.

In the name of the Holy Trinity (+) and the host of heaven,
and the Church of God,

I curse ye that in all your goings ye be cursed:

Wasting day by day: waning till no remnant be found.

May He who will judge the quick and dead by fire grant this.
Amen."

The people in the Fille Fjeld district preserve the memory of this litany, by holding a Mouse-feast every year. They dress in their best clothes, says Pontoppidan, and go to sleep instead of doing any work!

The natives hate the lemmings now as much as ever they did when this sounding curse was read, with bell, book, and candle complete. The swarm melts away daily under the combined attacks of men, beasts, and birds. The great Lapland owl follows them, and a host of goshawks and kestrels, *kat-ugler* (cat-owls) and ravens. Pontoppidan says that the Finns' dogs eat them, leaving their heads:

this may be, but I have seen a great many dead lying without a head, which looks as if some animals considered the head the best part of them. The courageous "beasties" recognise no obstacles, and have no such word as "impossible" in their dictionary. Accordingly they march straight up glaciers and across fiords to the sea, where their remnant is miserably drowned. I have seen the shore of a fiord covered with dead lemmings thrown up by the waves. It is said that they carry their young on their shoulders, but that I did not see. I shall not soon forget the horror and disgust which I excited at the posthouse of Maristuen by bringing one in alive to ask the Norsk name. The boys swore, the women screamed, the lemming ran about the room and stood up squeaking in a corner, till killed by the united efforts of the Norwegians. I found twelve months afterwards that they were just as disgusted as before, at the idea of any one touching a *lom-hund*. The right name is *lemmene*, but the peasants have corrupted it into *lom-hund*, thinking that they look like little dogs, when they stand up and bark or squeak at the passer-by. Certainly they are the most courageous of animals, and never think of

getting out of the way for man their lord and master. Weasels are said sometimes to shew the same fearlessness, and a peasant in England was not long ago attacked by some stoats or weasels in a lane, and had great difficulty in beating them off. There are many superstitions about lemmings, the peasants believing that they forebode war or pestilence. The oldest hunters adhere to the story of the reindeer eating them, and the same thing is said of the red-deer. Others think that they drop from the sky^a, or from the *gamle djævel*, 'the old devil,' "who lives in London," as a Norwegian added when telling me his ideas about the lemmings. It used to be firmly believed that the fog used to pick them up in Lapland and drop them down in more cultivated regions. Others who gave up the fogs, said that the creatures were caught up by whirlwinds and waterspouts and so showered upon the fields. It is great fun to watch a pointer who has found one in the juniper: he puzzles over the new animal, not knowing if it be game or no,

^a As Munster writes, "The lemmings be manifestly observed by the inhabitants to fall in feculent showers, and, like locusts, consume all that is green."

protesting against its "legitimacy" by the flickering motion of his tail, used in England for rabbits, and ends perhaps by getting bitten on the nose by the lemming, too much gorged with berries to waddle away.

CHAPTER XI.

NORWEGIAN SUPERSTITIONS.

"One had a cat's face,
 One whisked a tail,
 One tramped at a rat's pace,
 One crawled like a snail;
 One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
 One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry."

C. ROSSETTI.

IN a previous chapter I was obliged to postpone any account of the superstitions of the Norwegians simply from the magnitude of the subject, nor will it now be possible to give more than a meagre sketch of them.

The ancient religion of Scandinavia was full of witchcraft: it was a splendid thing, as late as the reign of Olaf, to be a warlock with a bag of storms and a cloak of fog. There are two reasons for this: in the first place, Odin himself left the tradition of having been a great wizard, and in after times is called the Lord of the Abyss and Prince of Air; in the next, the climate and physical features of Norway are particularly suited for the growth

of a religion of terror. Hence the meanness (so to speak) of the Scandinavian traditions, which are stuffed full of witches' rides and sabbats, hell-horses, wild huntsmen, and goblins of all kinds. What else would an untaught population believe in a land where all the phenomena of nature are more or less terrible. The squall on the fiord, the tumbling surf round the skerries, wild noises in the woods, and howlings on the fells, all seemed the work of demons. The power of nature does not so much strike the native of a milder climate, as one who lives in a land whose northern parts are a sheet of snow and the rivers blocks of ice for so many months of winter. The valleys, the sole possessions of man, must have seemed to lie at the mercy of the beings who lived in $\frac{99}{100}$ of the country in snow or desert. It was easy for one looking on the deep rent gorges, sometimes half filled with *débris* of the cliffs, to believe that Thor had been there with his hammer, that the giants really lived in such places as the Jotun Fjeld, and tossed the boulders about for sport. The rower on the long black fjord, with no one near for miles round, would easier believe in treacherous spirits who plucked

men down, or wrapped them in fog, than men whose home is by level plains or open bays. Even at the present day the peasants are liable to madness more than the inhabitants of all other European countries, simply from their lonely and gloomy life in some of the thinly peopled parts of Norway. Thus we see that the savage and melancholy character of the old religion was given by the climate of the country, and their sense of smallness and impotence before the power and vastness of nature led the people into a thousand unworthy superstitions. There are no harmless oreads or water nymphs, or pretty pixies in their stories; their gentlest spirit, Uldra with the fish's tail, must have a human victim once a-year.

The fights of the early settlers in Norway and Sweden with the aborigines gave rise to many legends of dwarfs and trollds, who had the control of caves and mines, and queer places of all sorts. The allegories of the *Edda* were received by a later age as realities, and the destroyer Fenris, the witch Old Age, the serpent which holds the world together, were as much believed to exist as the wood-demon whom the cotters heard at night knocking the trees together,

or the hammer of Thor which made the shore bellow in the storm. Odin taught his followers to believe more marvels than have been foisted on to the life of Mahomet. "He was eloquent to persuade," says the Ynglinga Saga, in the "Runic Chapter" on the virtues of Odin, "and knew all arts: his blessing made men sure to conquer in war: he could take any shape he pleased, and go all over the world in the twinkle of an eye. Odin could make his enemies in battle deaf or blind, and their swords blunt as sticks, while his own men, with the strength of bears and bulls, the rage of mad dogs and wolves, rushed against fire or sword unhurt; and they called this *Berserks-gangr* ^a.

"Odin often shifted himself, and would become a beast, a fish, a snake or a bird, while his body lay asleep or dead ^b. He could still the raging of fire or waves by a word. His ship Skibladner carried him over the sea; it folded up like a rag. He always

^a 'Bare-shirt-goers,' from their throwing off their coats of mail.

^b This power has been claimed by modern mesmerists as well as by Odin and the mediæval magicians. Matthew Paris quotes some examples of the use of it, and there is a legend of a Saxon monk who died in this way and saw the next world, and then came back again.

kept by him the head of Mimi, which told him all the news from other countries. So did two crows, which he had taught to speak. All these arts made him the wisest of men. But the best of all his arts was called *seid*, which told him the future and enabled him to alter it at will by means of charms^c. These, however, were so horrible that men thought it shame to use them, so they were given up to the *priestesses*. *All Odin's wisdom descended to the high-priests.*" In this last sentence we have a key to the policy of these keepers of the mysteries, and to the indignation felt by the upper classes at the introduction of the worship of "the White Christ."

The Ynglinga Saga is so evidently a piece of fabulous mythology, (as Snorro Sturlesson seemed also to think when he cut it short, in comparison with the historical Sagas,) that it is impossible to say

^c The charms used were messes like those of the witches' caldron in Macbeth,—“the dew off a boiled swine's liver,” blood of toads and snakes, &c. The preparation of these nastinesses was enough to make a man blind, they said, so the women were made to concoct them. This form of magic was called *seid*; there was another named *galldur*, also invented by Odin, which merely consisted in knowing how to write the Runes. Reading and writing have seemed uncanny and magical to the vulgar in every country. Compare the origin of the word 'spell,' and the spae-books of mediæval wizards.

whether Odin was a real man or not, and to fix on any of the dates for his invasion of Scandinavia (varying from 500 to 100 B.C.) with greater certainty than the rest. One account says that he and the twelve Asa-men fled from the Don in fear of Pompey the Great. Torfæus makes two Odins at an interval of some centuries, one the deified leader, the other the ancestor of the Norwegian kings. Another ingenious theory^d supposes that the worship of Odin was engrafted on that of Thor and Loki, in a rude imitation of Christianity; they call attention to the occasional baptism of heathen kings, the cross-shaped hammer of Thor, Odin and his twelve quasi-apostles, and some remains of a doctrine of a Trinity, just as the modern forms of Buddhism have been said to owe their existence to contact with Asiatic Christian communities. In this theory, the cult which really came from Asia is said to have been a dualistic worship of Thor the father of good, and Loki the evil spirit: that Thor was in some places considered the head of all the gods is shewn by the custom in the temple of Upsala of placing Odin and Freyr on each hand of Thor's image in the centre.

^d Laing.

Their craft and means of ruling the people was at an end, notwithstanding a desperate effort made to shew that the priests knew all along what was coming, and that the White Christ was only Baldur the Beautiful alive again! It was fortunate for Norway that it was the interest of her kings to introduce Christianity, seeing that it broke up the power of their rivals, the great landowners and the priests.

In the earliest legends this white sorcery is always seen side by side with belief in the power of demons and dwarfs, even against the powerful descendants of Odin. King Svegde saw a dwarf standing by a white stone door in a rock, and did not know that it led into a Jotun's house. He followed the dwarf in, and the door shut never to open again:—

“The daylight-hating
Goblin's brood,
Who kept that house,
Played Svegde false.
Into the stone
The great-heart king,
Kin to dark warlocks*,
Leaped after the dwarf.

* *Dulsa-konnr*, 'akin to Dulsar,' a wizard who walked invisible "by the receipt of fern-seed."

And there the white stone
 Of the prince of the deep¹,
 Home of a giant,
 Yawned for the king."—YNGLINGA-TAL.

When Christianity finally overcame the Asa-worship, Odin and his family suffered the common fate of old-fashioned gods, by becoming the demons of the new religion, just as the gods of Olympus were allowed by the Fathers, and those of Palestine were represented by Milton, to have a real existence in the shape of fiends. This added a great many names to the list of evil spirits already existing, and Thor the Thunderer became just as much a name of reproach as Ymir or Bor the giants, and the representatives of the still older superstitions, so that it is not uncommon to this day in Sweden to say, "Odin take you!" "Go to Thor-djævel," or "Thor-dyvel."

On Yule-night or *Jöl*², when the "midwinter blood³" was sacrificed in old times, a rabble-rout

¹ *Sök-mímle*, 'Dark-giant,' i.e. Odin.

² *Jöl*, from *Jölner*, a name of Odin. (Laing.) A better derivation than that from *hjul*, 'a wheel,' as if meaning, 'the revolving year.'

³ A sacrifice to Freyr on the oval blood-stones (*blödstein*) in front of farm-houses. Some of these still remain in their old places.

of ex-gods and evil beings enjoyed their short holiday. The columns of rock by the coast were for a few hours changed back into their old form of giants, and from holes and caves and skerries came the dwarfs, the representatives of the primitive Finnic faith. The Asgaard-reia, the wild hunters of Odin's race, tore up and down the woods still more fiercely at the same time: the water-spirits, or (as the Icelandic doctors Latinized them) the *Hippopotami Aquatiles*, could not come, being 'frozen out,' but Nipen came from his fjords to eat the *jöl-kage* and drink his *varmt öl*. At Yule-tide, too, came crowds of *jöl-dölgar*, or winter-spectres, the natural offspring of dim light, driving snow, and winter noises.

The sunshine was full of light-elves (our fays), whose black brothers lived in the caves and forests and did blacksmith's work. They were not seen, but the echo (dwarf-song, *dvergmál*) shewed that they were there.

The 21st of December was called Hogg-night, not, as some suppose, meaning hawk-night, *nox falconum*, but the slaughter-night, from the multitudes of cattle killed for provisions. The word

still survives in the Hogg-manay song of the Scotch children. The blood of the cattle, including a proportion of horses, was collected and called *hlaut*, and with it all the temples and worshippers were sprinkled. The meat was cooked in the temple, and bowls of ale brought in. One was drained to Odin, another to Njord and Freyr. Then followed *bragafull* and *minne*, libations in memory of dead and glorious heroes; these last were unlimited in number.

Summer of course was the "season" for the above mentioned "hippopotami."

Besides Huldra, or Uldra, fish-tailed and cow-uddered, there was Nik, the German Neckar¹, who sang beneath the water and would have been converted if he could. Then there were Alfreir, a goblin who hid in thickets, and (the same word) the *hülfr*, used in the *Edda* for "aërial and subterranean devils."

The opinion that Norway was peopled by three distinct races is supported not only by the different features, hair, and eyes of the people, according to

¹ Nickr was also one of Odin's many names, and the original of our Old Nick, unless that comes from Nockr, another name of a spirit, which belonged to Odin.

their Finnic, Celtic, or Caucasian descent, but by the three separate legends of the dwarfs, the giants, and the Asa-gods. The dwarfs who live in holes may be a reminiscence of the Jomala-worshipping Lapps and the giants of the Celts, and the family of Odin were degraded to the condition of demons in their turn by the conquering religion.

The different races have amalgamated to a great extent, yet one sees startling contrasts sometimes between the pure Scandinavian with his yellow hair and pale blue eyes, the "Gothi capillis albidis rectis, oculorum iridibus cinereo-cærulescentibus" of Linnæus, and the dark short-haired, black-eyed peasant in some of the western valleys, or those whose eyes have caught the regular Mongolian squint from marriage of their ancestors with Finns or Quains.

The old writers account for the existence of the giants in Scandinavia by stating that they "reliquias esse gigantum Canaanæorum a Joshuâ et Calebo expulsorum, A.M. 2506^k." They allow, however, that they can only trace the migration of the giant Canaanites *as far as Pannonia*.

^k Torfæus in Pont.

Onenning was the lubber fiend, and Nenner another name of a water devil; Falr a monstrous man of the woods; and Christianity added to the list Puken, or Puck, a name of Satan, who also appears as Skolle the Fox. The chief function of the devil as Puke or Puck is "to draw men out of their way," or to sit by the roadside to give them falls from horseback; this undignified employment has led us in England to think that Puck is a paltry sort of Will-o'-the-wisp or Jack-a-lantern, but he has had a greater dignity than that of a rural elf. It is very curious to see how names degenerate from a solemn to a ridiculous meaning, generally for some political reason. I do not know why *bogu*, 'god,' (Russ), should have been degraded into the English bogie, but it is hardly a greater change than Thor-devil from Thor, or 'As the Icelandic nightmare, which first meant an Asaman, Odin or one of his family, then any idol, and lastly, an *incubus*. The most absurd change was in the meaning of the word *gaud*. The heathen Norsemen used this word for "God," but on the introduction of Christianity a shorter pronunciation was invented, God or Gud, and the

broad form was used as a word of abhorrence for any idol. 'As was also used as a synonym for Odin, for instance in the sentence, *So hjalpi mjeir Freir, Niördr, og hinn helgi ás!* 'So help me Freyr and Niörd, and the holy Odin!'

This list of uncanny spirits does not include any household elves and trollds, but saith Wierus, lib. i. cap. 22, "Trolli and Telchines be very common in Norway: and be seen to do drudgery work, to draw water and dress meat." "Paracelsus reckons many places where they do usually walk in little coats, some two feet long. We call them hobgoblins and Robin Goodfellows, that would grind corn for a mess of milk, cut wood!" &c.

These household spirits are like Milton's lubber-fiend, not only harmless but useful: not so our *hipopotami* and *-mæ*, who "be water-devils, and *Habundia* is their queen." They deceive men in many ways, as the Norwegians still firmly believe, quoting the story of the King of Sweden who was feasted by one, and other men deluded away from their homes to follow these creatures to their holes and ponds. Nay, Olaus Magnus says that they have often been

¹ Burton, Anat. Melancholy.

seen—chiefly, he adds, by old women and young children!

In the waterfalls and rapids lives a demon Grimm, who may be propitiated by the offering of a goat. The Neckar is also seen, but only “when the governor of a castle in Finland is dying” can one be certain that he will come up and play in the lake on his harp^m. Burton in his “Anatomy” tells us of a Lapland witch, Agaberta, who rivalled Odin in her varied accomplishments. “She would turn herself now young, now old, high, low, like a cow, or a bird, or a snake, or what not.” He adds most sensibly, ‘And yet for all this subtilty of theirs, as Lypsius well observes, neither these magicians nor devils can take away gold or letters out of mine or Crassus’ chest and give to their admirers.’”

The same thing has been often said of and to our English white-wizards, who can learn anything by clairvoyance or rappings except the number of a locked-up note or the winner of the next Derby, or anything which would give money to themselves or their clients.

The old Norwegians had various unpleasant com-

^m Burton, Anat.

panions in their houses besides these trollds and elves. There was the knocking-fiend (who has rapped in Cock-lane and in many more fashionable streets), whom our ancestors called the Foliot. There was Mara, the nightmare who trod King Wisbur to death. He shouted out that Grimhild was sitting on his legs and his courtiers ran to raise them, but "the mare" rushed to his throat and choked him, as sang Thiodolf the Skald. In modern times Mara the nightmare has been superseded by human nightmares in private life. Women are thought to go out at nights (unconsciously and spiritually) while asleep in bed, and to crush people's chests, choke babies, &c. Men are not subject to this "possession of the devil," but are often afflicted with lycanthropy. The *wehr-wolf* knows when the fit is coming upon him, but must go at the proper time to the woods in the form of a savage wolf. In another form of this superstition the *var-ulf*, *lycanthrope*, or *loup-garou* (*lupus garulphus* of the Middle Ages), is supposed to fly about in an infinitesimal shape. Mr. Marryat notices the same superstitions in Denmark. The companions of the mare were the *svef-nörrer*, the rout of nightly spectres which

frightened many an old bonder in his bed, who would have scorned them by day, and laughed at any one who saw them as a Jack-a-dreams (*draums*).

Besides these, he must have been troubled by thoughts of the Tilbere and Drageducke sucking the cows and eating his butter by night, just as our farmer Hodge turns in his bed and "drats the blarmed hedgehogs as takes all the milk." In the south of Norway the witches were kept down by judicious *auto-da-fés*, but in Lapland and Finmark they flourished till lately, and indeed are hardly extinct now. The witch sat and turned her magic wheel, singing runes as she spun, and raising or stilling storms. She collected winds in bags and sold them to many a Ulysses, destined to be deceived when he opened them. Many of the Northern nobles were supposed to have this power in the first Christian reigns, but by binding the warlocks to rocks in the sea, or simply cutting their throats, the kings reduced these formidable arts to their proper place among old spae-wives and superstitious sailors.

No notice of the old superstitions would be at all complete if the form of madness called lycanthropy were not mentioned. Many Norwegians have been

hypocondriacal in this way, and are mentioned in the old histories as having fancied themselves to be bears or wolves. This is a disease for which they were not so responsible as for their remnants of Odin worship, fear of lonely woods and fjelds, and their too great devotion to *öl* and *bior*. No doubt the witches used to throw themselves into a sort of fit by taking certain herbs, unless, indeed, hysteria would account for their trances and "possessions." The Berserks are supposed to have made themselves mad and "gifted with the strength of ten," by eating some herb whose virtues and name have been lost. It is certain that both in Ireland and Norway these Berserk-gangers could make themselves run a-muck by some means unknown to us, at their own pleasure, just as modern Malays excite themselves with *bhung*. If I were asked how far are these old women's tales believed at the present time in Norway, I should say that it is very hard for a foreigner to find out the real belief of the peasants; they have sense enough to be ashamed of their superstitions before strangers. In some parts the mention of wood and water sprites is received with a laugh; in others with ill-con-

cealed apprehension, and I think that it will be found that the *cult*, or semi-worship of Nipen, is most usual in the north and near the Dovre Fjeld, for instance, in Foldalen; that the peasants of the Miosen lake district and Gudbrandsdal have by no means forgotten their fear of Uldra, and that in all parts there are many superstitious customs, which they conceal from the casual tourist. When a child is sick they bury eggs in an ant-hill; when an image of the ancient gods is dug up they keep it as a charm, and think that the bronze figures of Odin and Thor will cure diseases, like amulets. The remembrance of Thor exists still, not only in the curses of the Swedish boors, but in the Norwegian name of a peculiarly fine sort of barley called *Thors-byg*. A very bad sort is called *Loke's* barley. The peasants keep up the remembrance of the Thunderer, as is natural in the country which honoured him most of all the Northern kingdoms. But the Norwegian's idea of him has degenerated. Thor is now a loutish sort of giant, who sometimes gets drunk and quarrels with those of the giants' brood who still linger in the fjelds. On stormy nights when they fight, the stones are heard rattling about among the cliffs.

Grimm says, in his *Deutsche Mythologie*, that the peasants in many parts of Germany are wont to leave a shock of their hay for Odin's eight-footed horse. Spells of many kinds are practised; magpies are feared but protected, like weasels, by the Danish boors, who uncap on meeting one; with many more remains of the ancient creeds than tourists will discover, who are generally in total ignorance of the state of the people's belief in our own country. How few people could estimate the extent of the belief in sorcery through Devonshire and parts of Somerset, or detail the ancient customs kept up in outlying districts like the isle of Portland or the remoter parts of Cornwall!

I will only mention one more superstition which has descended from the days of Odin to our own time. I mean the horse of Hela (*hel-hest*, the 'hell-horse'), on which she rode to slay men. (It is mentioned in the better reading of the *Ynglinga Saga*, cap. 20, as Narfa's *jödis*, or horse.) This horse was sent to her by burying it alive, and whoever saw its ghost capering about afterwards might know that Hela had come for him. This sacrifice was extended in Christian times to burying a live

horse or a young lamb under the foundation of a new church. The Danes even buried a live girl^a under a wall to make it steady, thus carrying out an old Greek legend about the mason who built up his wife in the wall of a palace to make it safe and secure! The peasants are as firm in their belief of the vision of the Hel-hest as they were in the primeval times, when Hela sent it to carry off King Dyggve.

What strange forms of bugbears, devils, witches, and goblins are these! The reader may say with old Burton, with whom we may all agree, that "strong conceit or imagination is *astrum hominis* and the rudder of this our ship, which reason should steer, but, overborne by phantasy, cannot manage, and so suffers itself and this whole vessel of ours to be over-ruled and oftentimes overturned."

^a Vide Marryat's Denmark and Jutland.

CHAPTER XII.

ANIMAL SUPERSTITIONS.

THE Norsemen, like all other rude nations, had many superstitions about wild animals, whose ever-ready and various instincts seemed something supernatural to them. The wild beasts lived in haunted glens and howling fells, they were strong and cunning, so that men felt that there was a mystery about their ways. In the earliest literature we find the instincts of foxes, snakes, and bears considered to be of a higher kind than the erring and imperfect wisdom of savages. The same fables which are the amusement of our nurseries, were once the poetry and the allegories of grown-up men, who had received them as half-true, half-false; the same hunters who killed a wolf wherever they found him, would yet believe that they got the victory over some superior being, whether demon or enchanted prince. Thus they would say that "Biorn the Bear had the wit of two and the strength of seven men." The most perfect expression of this feeling of mingled respect and hate for wild animals is in the romance of

“Reynard the Fox,” though that has more of conscious allegory in it than the vaguer legends, which still survive in the folk-lore of peasants and the fables of children.

In Germany the fox had more respect paid to him than in Scandinavia. The Norsemen did not see in him a wise man's soul, or tell stories of great princes turned to foxes by art-magic, though they gave him credit for the same courage and many-sided wit which appears in the *Reineke Voss*. To them the fox, *ræv*, was identical with *skolle*, the devil, and, like the mediæval idea of the devil, was full of craft and scurvy tricks. But the wolf was far more interesting to them than his cousin; he was ‘gray-legs,’ ‘gray-beast,’ ‘the horse of the witches’ (*gand-reidr*, *gran-rjödr*). When Harold Hardraade was for sailing on his fatal expedition against Harold of England, a man came to warn him, saying that he had seen a huge spæ-wife riding on a grey wolf, whom she kept feeding with corpses; but the king would not believe the omen. Other names for it were *yla*, ‘the howler,’ *varg* and *vargüimja*, ‘the she-wolf,’ (which sometimes took children to the woods and reared them). Then there was Fenris the Wolf in the old-

est mythology, who was to destroy even the Odin family in the dreadful day of Ragnarok, and Freke a pet wolf of Odin, which shared the obloquy into which his master fell in Christian times. All these things combined to make the gray beast more hated here than was his brother Sir Isgrim the Wolf, a plain and honest beast enough, in the legends of Germany.

The well-known name of *isgrim* for the wolf is the Icelandic *ysagrimr*, which may mean 'the rushing beast' (*ysra*, 'to rush,' *grim*, a name of a man), as *omgrim*, 'the lion,' certainly means the 'roaring one,' (*om*, 'a loud noise'). *Grimr* is frequently used in the composition of the proper names of men, as well as of animals, e. g. *Arngrim* or *Arengrimur*, (*quasi* Altar-man, from *aren* or *arn*, 'an altar'). *Aren* meant, 1. the altar set up by the first occupants of new land; 2. as in modern Danish, the hearth. *Grimr* as a proper name may be the same word as *grimr*, 'fierce.' Others variously connect it with *gramr*, 'a king,' *greme*, 'anger,' *gryma*, 'a frosty night.' The common Norwegian name *ulf* and our wolf mean 'howler.'

There were divers virtues attributed to his re-

mains when dead, as we may find in any mediæval book of medicine. The powdered lungs were good for consumption, and his dried flesh if eaten as a powder was a tonic, much as in our time Hambro' beef scraped is said to give good appetite. Then upon the principle that he who eats strong things must himself be strong, as "who drives fat oxen must himself be fat," to eat a wolf's heart roasted in a pair of tongs over the fire gave a wolfish courage and ferocity, as was satisfactorily shewn in the case of Ingjald, son of King Önund the Road-maker. Thus Sigurd gained magical wisdom by eating a dragon's heart; Guttorm (says Pigot) ate of a snake and wolf's heart boiled together, which made him both wise and cruel.

A wolf-skin tunic would turn the edge of a sword, and to these simple coats of mail the Berserks I should think owed a great deal of their invulnerability. They said that they came clad in wolf-skins to frighten the enemy, just as they wore gold spiral rings twisting up their arms merely for ornament; but these last were as good as armour, and so were the skin coats. "To expel vain imaginations or devils," a wolf's heart eaten or carried about was

said in the Middle Ages to be almost as good as "an old cock or a ram's head." We see by all this that wolves used to be thought as "uncanny" as the modern Norwegian thinks them hateful. Small blame to him, when the wolves come in winter, and, failing the sheep, will eat the dog. *Altsamme for fattige*, 'It's all one to a poor devil what he eats,' says their proverb.

We have already discussed the curious beliefs current here about the *maggies*, *lemmings*, and "such small deer," so I will pick out a few of the stories told of the bear, whom they think to be as clever, as our fables make him clumsy and stupid. The old Norsemen called the male and female *beorn* and *birna*, for which the modern peasants have *bamsin* and *bingsen*^a. Among other queer appellations in the *Edda* we find *ingul-tanne* and *inge-tanne*, which I suppose means 'hedgehog-biter,' (as *igull* means 'hedgehog,' and *tanne* 'I bite'). Pontoppidan makes two sorts of bears in Norway. Wormius three (four including the white). The grass-eating bear, which will follow the

^a Pontoppidan.

“one of these stood by every evening while the maid was milking in Rogsund parish:” “he never did harm, only in autumn by a tacit understanding he carried off a kid or a lamb to his den.” Then there is the horse-bear, which attacks the cattle and horses, but loves cows best. Failing this sort of meat, he will catch fish in rivers! Last comes the *myre-bjorn*, or ant-bear, the least in size, which feeds on ant-nests.

The whole division of bears into these three kinds is as fabulous as the story of the animal spoiling its skin to spite the hunter, or of his having especial care and tenderness for children, hating the system of hanging bells on cattle, and firing off the huntsman's gun when he can, to prevent accidents!

Of beavers there are not enough left in Norway for many superstitions to remain about them; I only recollect the story of the beavers using one of their number as a waggon, lying on his back and pulling him by the tail, all loaded with wood or mud for building.

The castor got from the beaver was used as a medicine for many diseases, and vied in virtue with powdered narwhal's or 'monocerot's' horn, or that

horrible medicine recommended by the old Bishop, two ounces of stoat's or ermine's blood warm ! The fishermen used castor also to keep off the sea-serpent when it came too near, just as our own fishermen throw out the insides of fish and scaly water to keep off a "school of grampuses." There are other virtues in the skin of "the little beast *bif*" for making hats and jerkins, and his tail was eaten in Lent, being considered to be fish, like seal or dolphin, though his body of course was flesh.

There is a most curious story in the *Heimskringla* about a dog belonging to Eystein the Bad, a king of the northern provinces. The Drontheim people had killed his son, so when he had conquered them a second time he gave them the choice between his slave Thorer Faxe and his dog Saurr to be king of Drontheim. They preferred the dog, because they thought that they would be able to do what they pleased. But he had been bewitched, so that out of every three words he barked two and spoke one like a man ! They made for the dog a collar and chain of silver and gold ; and when the roads were muddy his courtiers carried him in their arms. He had a royal throne, and sat on a high place like

a king, and lived in Inderöe^b (now called Saurrhaug, or the high place of this Saurr). During the three years of his reign he passed many excellent laws, which he signed by marking them with his claw, much as Charlemagne signed by smudging his inky thumb on the parchment. But one day some wolves attacked his flocks, and his courtiers set him on to attack them; so down upon them he rushed like a valiant king and was killed for his pains. So ended the reign of the Dog-King^c.

The Norwegians were later than the people of other countries in disbelieving the story of the growth of barnacle-geese from the shell fruit of the barnacle-tree, and of vast masses of swallows being found under the ice in a winter torpor, beak to beak, and rolled up all together. I daresay they believe this in many parts still. Certainly they retain other marvels in natural history, which have been exploded long ago. Such appears to be the account of that dreadful fly in Lapland, fitly called *furia*

^b There are two islands at the mouth of the Trondhjem's Fjord, called Interöen and Hitteroen, (antiqu. Idri and Ytteri,) or Inner Island and Outer Island. In the inner holm is the farm of Saurrhaug.

^c Saga of Hako the Good.

infernalis, which flew at travellers and bit them, raising a little black mark, which swelled, and killed them in a few hours. The older accounts attributed this to a sort of larva, or grub, which by bending its back could shoot from a marshy place and fix itself on the face of a passer-by. The grub has been modified into a fly, possessing qualities nearly as bad, but the details are probably immensely exaggerated. If they were true, this fly would be as bad as the dreadful Miani bug (*argas persicus*) which Mr. Eastwick describes in his "Diplomatic Residence in Persia." The bite of this monstrous bug kills a European within twenty-four hours; the sufferer dies raving mad and dreadfully convulsed! It does not hurt the natives, any more than the Lapps are said to be hurt by this (possibly apocryphal) "infernal fury!"

The next animal of which queer stories are told in Norway is the Great Northern Diver. They are often seen on the fjords, and the two smaller varieties of *colymbus* on the meres and tarns all over Norway. The Icelanders call this bird the "bird of the heavenly breastplate," either from the beautiful markings of its down, or the thickness of its plumage,

which protected it against an arrow or the primitive fire-arms of the period. *Himin* is 'heaven,' and *brynja* 'a corslet^d,' and the compound name *him-bryn* got corrupted into *yMBER*, *immer*, or Ember goose. There is no apparent connection between heavenly-mailed, Ember goose, and the fourth week in Advent, yet they are all three closely joined in the stories of the great diver. Resenius says that the name Ember-Sunday, or *Ommer-sondag*, is taken from the belief that on this day alone does the Ember goose set its foot on land, exactly a week before Christmas. For this reason some pedantic Norwegians have called it the *halcyon*, 'sleeping on the sea.' "De quibus diebus Norvegus mysta quidam nuper est commentatus:—

'Immer kaldis et slags söefugl, mesten saa store som
Gies, sigis ickun en gang om Aaret at sætte
Sin fod paa landet nemlig Sju Dage for
Juel hvilken tid derforre kaldis Inner-Uge.'"

The only objection to the legend is that it does not correspond to the periods of the Ember Days.

The common name of this bird is *lom*, 'loon,'

^d *Brynja*, 'an iron corslet,' is derived from *brunn*, 'brown,' 'iron-coloured.'

which it gained by its awkward hobbling gait on land, and which means 'lame one.' But from its well-known cunning any sharp-witted fellow got to be called *lomskr*, or 'like a lom.' Others say that lom always meant 'an anxious and careful creature.' The name applies both to the Ember goose (*colymbus glacialis*), to the black-throated diver (*colymbus arcticus*), and the red-throated (*colymbus septentrionalis*), a very handsome bird often seen upon the fjords. The 'blackthroats' have a peculiarly shrill cry, something like the word *kareeka* (it is said), so that the peasants used to say:—

"Dæ verte bæteraff, di loomin quia saa*."

'The weather betters, the looms squeak so.'

And when the bird ceases that "querulous hui hui," and promises fine weather by its other note, the fishermen would say:—

"Vi fær braat Torre, di loomin roopa turkeroff."

'We shall get a bright January, the looms are calling turkeroff.'

A word coined in imitation of their cry. These notes are well known to fishers on our own coasts, who can tell a coming storm by the cries of the 'sprat-

* Ol. Wormius in Pont.

loons.' The Norsemen have the same superstition about the loon as is commonly held by peasants of the cuckoo, viz. that whoever hears the first note of its voice in the spring, and has not broken his fast, will lose his nearest friend before the year is out.

The admiration of the natives is roused by the (fabulous) skill of the *colymbus* in getting up to its nest, which is built close to the water; they think, says Olaus Wormius, that the bird cannot use its poor feeble feet, so sticks his beak, which is long and hooked, into the ground, and lifts himself as by a lever into the nest. This would be a feat worthy of an acrobat, or a sailor pulling himself up a ship's side by his tomahawk struck into the wood. As I said before, they made the loon-skin caps, called *kabbuts*, out of the skins of these birds.

CHAPTER XIII.

SEA-MONSTERS.

FEW writers about Norway have thought fit to omit all mention of that vexed question, the existence of the sea-serpent. It might therefore be thought that the subject is now threadbare. It may, however, be still worth while to notice these stories, if only to give the best and most worthy of consideration in one place. The general plan of those, who scout the bare idea of this monster's existence, has been to attack the stories separately, and to say, such or such an account makes the animal blow like a whale; another gives it the mane of a seal; one serpent was a school of whales, another a tree twisted in seaweed, and so on in each case. They have not, I believe, ever considered the evidence all together, so as to arrive at any general rule to account for the rise of these strange stories. Pontoppidan has gravely related a great many impossibilities, and received hearsay evidence without much discrimination of its inherent probability;

but it ought to be recollected, that he has tried very hard to give solid and reliable depositions about this particular matter, and that his story deserves at least a fair hearing. I myself feel no inclination at all to believe in the existence of this animal. But we all know that far more incredible falsehoods have been believed, are believed, and supported by respectable witnesses. We know that our own eyes and ears are not to be trusted in certain cases, and that excited or prejudiced men are the fools of their enthusiasm. It would be curious if we found that a large body of evidence had been collected for the last two centuries in support of the fact, that monsters of this kind exist in the North Sea. If the witnesses are numerous and weighty, and the beast does *not* exist, we shall have an interesting case of falsehood supported by honest and independent men for no object at all. If the witnesses are numerous and weighty and the beast *does* exist, we have an equally interesting case of a truth being almost universally pooh-poohed and rejected for no particular reason. I may therefore amuse some who read this little book if I collect into one list the most trustworthy of these stories, rejecting those

which are picked up at secondhand from fishermen and boors, or coined by an American editor.

1. The first good instance is the "sea-monster whose head reached over our maintop. It had a long, sharp snout, and spouted water like a whale. Broad paws—body covered with scales—lower parts like a serpent^a."

This was seen by Mr. Egede, a respectable Greenland missionary; he published an account of it, with a drawing by another clergyman who saw it, of a thick red-eyed creature with a large body and thin tail, July 1, 1734.

The picture is most absurd. Probably this was a whale of some sort; at any rate it is very different from the common account of the long serpent lying in many folds on the water in summer.

2. Bishop Pontoppidan heard from one Thorlack Thorlacksen that he, in 1720, had seen the long skin of a sea-snake which had been cast at the head of a fjord; he says also that another came ashore and died in Nord Fjord, another at Karmen, and divers other places.

I think that we may fairly reject all this on two

^a Mr. Egede's Narrative.

grounds: (1) The Bishop gives no authority but Thorlack, to whom (2) he had himself written to ask about a table said to be at Thorlack's home, and to have been covered with one of the skins. The man knew nothing about the table, but seems to have been unwilling to give an unfavourable answer to the Bishop's leading questions.

In the same way we reject the stories (a) of fishermen beating them off by throwing out a tub; (b) of driving them down by holding out castor or asafœtida; of (c) the snake running at boats and sinking them, or (d) snapping men out of them. All these are evident imitations of true anecdotes about various kinds of whales, except the last, of which no evidence is mentioned, except "the North traders" rather vaguely. Besides, the drugs are so powerful that they always *prevent the snakes from appearing!*

"*It is said*" that the fishermen when quite ringed round by his coils run their boat against his body to make him dive! "*Our fishers say*" that it is commonly six hundred feet long! Several American papers give very much the same sort of account with about the same degree of authority.

3. Olaus Magnus, *Hist. Sept.* xxi. 24, says, from his own experience, that there is "a worm in the Norway sea eighty feet long, and as thick as a child's arm."

Unfortunately for him he adds a farrago of rubbish which destroys the value of his experience.

4. Pontoppidan says, that Olearius says, that "a person of distinction" said, that the Burgomaster of Malmoe, a worthy man, said that he had seen one as thick as a wine-cask and in twenty-five folds. This the Bishop considers "well attested."

5. Ramus, *Descr. Norv.*, says that eleven men at once saw a large sea-snake at Drammen, A.D. 1687. But perhaps we had better pass to stronger evidences than these.

6. At Bergen, A.D. 1746, Captain de Ferry and two sailors made oath at the sessions that they saw near Molde a gray sea-snake, about forty feet long, with black eyes and a white mane; it was close to the ship, and the captain wounded it severely with a charge of shot. This evidence was taken down five years afterwards, and corroborated by Mr. Benstrup, Governor of Bergen, by the Rev. H. Stron, and two of his neighbours near Molde. The Bishop knew all these people, and they each swore to

having seen a sea-serpent at different times near Molde.

This is much better evidence, but it is to be regretted that their separate drawings were not preserved and compared. This snake was said to have had a head like a horse. Though Pontoppidan gives other instances, this and the story of Mr. Egede are the only two of which we may be certain that some large creature was seen quite close, which these people (doubtless saturated with prejudice) thought was the *søe-orm*.

We now come to rather better evidences; not that the Norwegians do not circulate as many vague reports of it as before, but that stronger proof is demanded, and the demand I suppose creates the supply.

7. Sir A. de C. Brook writes that Captain Schielderhup, Postmaster at Otersoe, a merchant of Krogøe Island (not named), and thirty others, being the whole population of the island, saw at various distances (beginning with two hundred yards) a grayish animal about six hundred feet (!) long, with a serpent's head. It lay dozing in the sun, made a crackling noise, and smelt very disagreeably.

Of this story I will only say that it has been ingeniously accounted for by Mr. Williams. He thinks that in hot summer weather a ridge of rocks will appear to wave and shine by a species of mirage; and he illustrates his theory by familiar experiments. Though this explanation will not fit all the stories, I think that it ought to have weight in this case, as he did not, I believe, make it specially for the serpent at Krogøe, which it suits, and since none of the witnesses say *that it ever moved in the hot weather*. It is probably in the same island that the fishermen are said to see the animal *all through the summer, off and on*. It would be worth while to go there and row up to this 'mirage' or monster, if the fishermen would go, or believe their own senses when they did go.

8. The same author adds that in 1849 a Mr. Greger told him that he and his mates saw the gray monster about sixty yards from the shore on which they stood. That they were so frightened that they ran away, and could give no particulars, except that it lay in coils very high above the water. There is not enough of this story.

9. The Bishop of Trondhjem told Captain Brook

that he had seen two serpents swimming in the Trondhjem's Fjord! They swam in large folds, and were about a hundred feet long. This story is decidedly damaged by the addition that they were visible for a very short time, and did not shew their heads. A few porpoises or grampuses (if they were not the original brace of sea-snakes) would persuade the worthy Bishop any day that he saw these two again.

Captain Brook brings forward the evidence of some more people, "of superior rank and information," and considers that the sea-serpent is finally established. We must remember that all these people were predisposed to believe beforehand, and invariably put down the flash of any long gray fish under a ship as a sea-serpent seen by them. This is all that one of his best cases comes to; in it a young man tells him that two sea-snakes flashed by beneath his boat, at which he struck with a handspike. He could only swear to just seeing a long gray animal, which might be, and probably was, a shark or a white dolphin, a common animal in these waters.

In the Travels of Lieut. von Kotzebue for the

Russian Government is a report of an animal resembling a sea-serpent seen by them off Behring's Island. "The shape was of the red serpent, and it was immensely long; the head like that of a sea-lion, and two disproportionately large eyes gave it a frightful appearance. It was very fortunate for us (says M. Kriukoff) that we were so near land, or else the monster would have swallowed us. It stretched its head far above the water, looked about for prey, and disappeared. The head soon rose again, considerably nearer; we rowed with all our might, and were very happy to have escaped the monster. The sea-lions were so terrified at the sight that they rushed into the water, and others hid themselves on the shore."

Von Kotzebue goes on to say that pieces of flesh are often thrown up on the shores of the Aleutian Islands, which no animals touch. The Aleutian people affirm that they have often seen this red sea-serpent and its flesh, and that those who tasted the latter died suddenly. They have another legend of a giant polypus, which is very like that of the kraken in some respects, though much smaller. It is curious that the double legend of these monsters

should be common to the North Pacific Ocean as well as to the North Sea. It is not of much use speculating on the nature of the red snake; it could hardly have been a large seal, or its congeners the sea-lions would not have been terrified. It is a strange story, but we may be pretty sure that there is no imposture in the scientific and official narrative of Kotzebue.

Another was seen by some English officers fishing near Halifax, 1833, and the bones of another brought from the Orkneys and placed in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, 1808.

Both of these, though supposed to be sea-serpents, were proved to be large sharks.

10. We now come to the best known case of all. H.M.S. "Dædalus," near the south-west coast of Africa, passed an animal sixty feet long, and serpent-headed: it was swimming to the south-west at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. The sea-serpent was reported to Captain McQuhae, who came up and saw it, and presented a drawing of it to the Lords of the Admiralty. Mrs. Somerville in her "Physical Geography" gives a summary of Professor Owen's reasons for not thinking this animal to be

a sea-serpent, but a huge seal of the species *otaria proboscidea*, making for its home fifteen hundred miles to the south. His theory is supported by the fact that this animal carries a great deal of its body out of the water when swimming, which gives it an appearance of being a much larger and longer animal than it is.

There are no *otariæ proboscideæ* in the North Sea, but there are sharks, grampuses, flocks of porpoises, schools of young whales, old whales of many kinds, mirages in hot weather, superstitious fishermen, and a general love of the marvellous hardly credible to educated people.

Can the tales of the sea-serpents be accounted for by any or all of these causes? Must we throw in remnants of the belief in the great Midgard serpent (which lived in these waters when Thor went out fishing), which was the girdle of the earth? Or must we say that enough evidence has been produced to warrant our believing? For my own part I should prefer to harden my heart and consider the case not proven ^b.

^b A consideration of the importance attached for ages to the legend of the great Midgard serpent is the easiest way of accounting

For those who are unconvinced by the voluminous but vague proofs of the existence of the sea-serpent, the stories of the krake will have no more weight than those of the mermaid who appeared to Queen Dagmar, and those which the Norse fishers profess to catch, and after giving them milk at their huts, to restore to the same place in the fjord.

The krake, or *krabben*, the 'crab' *par excellence*, is supposed to be an enormous polypus or medusa infesting the North Sea^c. It is identified with the *oxæna* of Pliny, and very likely with the floating island of Sindhad the Sailor, and the mile-round whales of Olaus Magnus. The only parts of it which have been seen are the white tentacles which rise out of the water like rocks, "as high as the masts of middle-sized vessels, according to the unanimous testimony of the fishermen," who fish *on its back*. Various rocks which from time to time

for the tenacity with which the peasants cling to the story of the sea-snake. In the same way the legend of the wolf Fenris will partly explain the prevalence of wehr-wolf stories. But we cannot account for them all in this way.

^c *Krake*, or *kraka*, properly means 'a hook' or 'crook.' Thence it has been transferred to this "monstrum marinum vehementer magnum et nocivum," from its crooked legs or feelers.

have risen in the sea, as at Breita Fjord in Iceland, and the (mythical) island of Gumars-ore near Stockholm, are put down to the rising of the horns of this *søe-trold*, or 'sea-mischief.'

There is one account in the British Museum of a strange sight seen by the crew of a merchant vessel going from England to Norway; they affirm that they saw a huge flat surface (not, however, *a mile and a half round*), on which white things moved about in a confused manner like soldiers. I have never seen any other story which professed to be evidence of this creature's existence, which is yet universally believed by the lower orders in Norway. Mrs. Somerville's words on the subject will be a fit conclusion to this hasty notice: "The general public, always fond of the marvellous and supernatural, is prone to credit these stories, and it is easy for even well-informed persons to raise up imaginary beings out of animals well known to the naturalist. To persons ready to give credit to the assertions of those who are ignorant of the first principles of zoology it would be a loss of time to explain how impossible it is that the head and jaws of a serpent, with a seal's skin and

mane, and the blow-hole of a porpoise, should be found united in one animal. As well try to reason with a believer in ghosts and fairies on the non-existence of these creatures of a disordered imagination."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FILLE FJELD.

THERE are two houses, or *herberges*, on the Fille Fjeld, Maristuen and Nystuen, kept by two sisters, equally kind and cleanly. Maristuen is the nearest to Leirdal, and is separated by the length of the *plâteau* (about ten miles) from Nystuen. The origin of the name Maristuen puzzled me at first, the meaning of the word being 'Mary's house.' Another Maristuen near the Rjukan Fos in Thelemarken is so called from the Mary of a legend, which tells how a lover came to meet his lass, and rushed to meet her along the narrow ledge of rock overhanging the waterfall: he fell in, and Mary hardly ever left the spot till her death. But there was no love-legend about the Fille Fjeld; indeed, it is never mentioned in the history except as the province of the unruly Fialir, or (in the Ynglinga Saga) as a synonyme for Norway. At last Pontoppidan solved the mystery, by saying that the people of Leirdal used once a-year to go to a chapel at the foot of the fell to pray, and, if they are not

slandered, to keep less holy appointments, on the day when the lesson teaches that "the Virgin Mary went up into the hill-country." Hence no doubt the name Maristuen for the first house on the Fille Fjeld, though Mary's chapel no longer exists. Nystuen of course only means 'the new house,' being built to match Maristuen on the other edge of the *plâteau*. Over the door at Maristuen is a bear's skull, which, as Murray says, "attests the skill of the Norsk sportsmen." It is many years since the beast was killed, but it is not the only one that has been killed here. The other bear is supposed at a still more remote date to have chased the jäger down the hill towards the river, and most providentially to have taken the muzzle of the gun in its mouth and so helped to "blow its own head to atoms." If one believed the common bear-talk, it was quite capable of committing suicide in this way to spoil its skull as an ornament; just as grave legends assert, that bruin when he sees he is over-matched will dive into the first stream he sees, after being shot, and take a huge stone down in his paws that he may sink and spoil his skin, "endeavouring to rob the huntsman of his hide, for which he knows

that he comes." So the bear is said to run off holding one of the men in front of him to prevent the others firing, finally throwing the peasant away into a ditch when he thinks that he is out of shot!

The house at Maristuen is divided into two parts, one being kept for travellers. Everything is clean and good of its kind, and those who come from Hallingdal will be pleased to sit down once more to a good dinner. They have kept a stock of Barclay and Perkins' London porter for some years, finding that the English are fond of it, while the Norwegians never stay there without having a treat of it. There are not many birds on the hill behind the house, and it takes a very hard walk to get any at all, so that it is not worth while to stay here for sporting purposes. I only mention this, because I have known several parties of English go to shoot on the Fille Fjeld on the recommendation of guide-books. The *ryper* are so uncertain in their movements, that no one can say, that it may not have been a good place for sport a few years ago: at present the nearest decent shooting is at Skee, a few miles on the eastern side of Nystuen.

Madame Maristuen appears on grand occasions in

a peculiarly glorious cap of white linen, plaited and furbelowed behind into the likeness of a scollop-shell. The unmarried girls in this part all wear snoods, or *queues*, of scarlet worsted, which is forfeited by a *faux pas*, as well as the silver wedding-crown. The matrons wear the fan-tailed caps in full dress, but the unhappy "half-wives" are forced to wear a plain cap of a much uglier form, an unpleasant badge, like the scarlet letter of Mr. Hawthorne's tale.

There is not much worthy of notice between the two post-houses, except a neat little *sæter* about twenty minutes' walk from Maristuen, and easily accessible to ladies. It belongs to a farmer in Leirdal, who deposes an old woman to keep it for him, and to bring down the milk and cheese once a-week. She wore a tremendously long snood, which she was much pleased at our noticing. Though the huts are low and smoky, everything is clean inside, and the *sæter-pige* is only too happy to shew her cheeses and cream-pans, though she will not sell the least thing. We wanted a miniature *møs-ost* which she had made, but could not get one. This cheese is the sweet brown brick which appears at every meal, made of goats' milk and cows' milk mixed. They make the white

and tasteless *prim-ost* at the same time, using up the materials which have already produced the *hjul-ost* (wheel-cheese), as the western peasants call it.

The highest part of the road is reached soon after leaving Maristuen ; it is perfectly flat, and walled in with low hills on each side, which though they are always patched with snow, have not nearly so much as one would expect from their height. The highest point of the Fille Fjeld^a is about four thousand feet, which in many parts of Norway is the height of perpetual snow. At this place, though there is no perpetual snow, there is a total absence of the ordinary vegetation. At Nys-tuen the birch grows, but is absent from thence to the declivity beneath Maristuen. The tops of the hills grow nothing but moss and reindeer-flowers, and the roadside-plants are juniper and dwarf willow. The snow-line, however, varies so much that it is very hard to say beforehand where snow will lie without melting. For instance, Snæhattan is covered in a cold year with snow and ice to its foot, as I have seen it, while in another summer it will only be white on the snow-hat which gives its name.

^a Suletind.

Last year we drove over snow on the Hemsedal's Fjeld road, where in ordinary summers it is not seen, and the snow-fields reached almost down to the level of the post-house at Bjöberg. This accounts for the terrible stories of travellers about the deep snow of the Dovre Fjeld, and the "perpetual congelation" at Nystuen. About half-way to Nystuen is placed a marble pillar marking the boundary of the Bergen's-stift (province) and the Christian's-stift; a similar pillar is seen on the Dovre Fjeld, shewing where the province of Trondhjem begins. Nystuen is built by a desolate-looking tarn, the Utza Vand, famous for its pink trout, and opposite to a steep hill from which there is a splendid view over all the Fille Fjeld, the Hurungerne mountains, and the snows of the Jotun Fjeld. A bank of clouds prevented my verifying an assertion of Pontoppidan, that he saw over all Valders and beyond Hallingdal from this point, a distance of a hundred and seventy miles from point to point.

Looking down to the house, one sees the source of the Leirdal river on one side, and on the other, from the Utza Vand the Beina river runs down the steep hill to fall through a chain of little lakes into the

Christiania Fjord. There are other places in Norway where two rivers rise within a few yards and separate to the east and west, and in some cases two rivers will run in this way from the opposite ends of the same lake. It is in this way that the Logen river, which runs to Christiania, is joined by the Otta river to the German Ocean, while from the source of the same Logen the great Rauma runs through Romsdal to the sea at Molde! On the north of Nystuen I could see the Tyen Lake from the top of the hill, along which I was to find my way to the Ymes Fjeld.

CHAPTER XV.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS.

It often happens that people who have come up Hallingdal from Christiania, or up Leirdal from Bergen, are stranded at the Fille Fjeld, and find that they cannot get to the other favourite haunts of the English without a long and roundabout journey to Miösen Lake and up Gudbrandsdal. But there is a route over the mountains from Nys-tuen which will lead pedestrians to Romsdal or the Dovre Fjeld, if they are not afraid of roughing it. The path is marked in Waligorski's map, and three places of rest appear on the way, Eidsbod, Gjendinsbod, and Tolormboden; beware of trusting to them, or thinking that the map means aught but that a small party will find room to sleep on the road in two dirty and isolated hovels! This is the path by which Captain Forrester, in Murray's words, "forced his way over glittering snowfields;" there is not generally much snow, but it is a very interesting walk. All provisions must be carried in

a knapsack, for there is nothing to eat on the route, and it might befall you (as it once befell me) to be hard-up for food and exceedingly glad of some deer's lungs in a bucket which the hunter had buried out of travellers' ken. How good the "lights" tasted, and how refreshing was the water in which they had boiled! In order to smoothe over its greasy look, we called it reindeer-soup, and breakfasted off it with relish. A pedestrian with a well-stocked wallet might despise such humble fare, but it is not more nasty to look at than tripe, and the old song of Beardslee has spoken approvingly of the dish for centuries:—

“Beardslee brittled the deer sae well,
He's ta'en out liver and lungs,
And wi' them he feasted his bluidy dogs
As if they were Earl's sons!”

Take care not to let Mrs. Nystuen, the most motherly of bodies, stock your knapsack with provisions uninspected by you, or they may turn out to be only palatable to Norwegians, and to consist of dried lamb's leg, of the taste and consistency of a very old luncheon lozenge or a dragoon's boot. These hams look just as if they were made of wood

and intended for stage properties. Avoid the bacon also, which will be raw and rancid. It will only be a source of grief to try cooking it on the point of sticks at Eidsbod; it is much better to give it at once to the stolid guide, who will heap uncouth blessings on you and the "*godt fisk.*"

Lake Tyen is the companion of all the first day's walk. It is soon reached from the hill above Nystuen, and stretches away for twenty miles to the hut, or rather hole, at Eidsbod, where we sleep. At first the views are most gloomy, with low black hills on either side; not a sign of life did we see except the keel of a boat long rotten, and the bodies of dead lemmings washing up and down on the brink, the relics of an army which had swum across the lake some days before, whose rear-guard I had seen infesting all the Fille Fjeld. About half way the scenery of the lake becomes more lively, and the shore of *gneiss* less shingly and disagreeable. The clouds broke away from the hills on the northern side, and shewed the shining sides of Breitvam and Slot-nypa. On this end of Tyen Vand abut the mountains of the Jotun Fjeld, the highest range in Norway, which includes the Hu-

rungerne Mountains (through which to-morrow's walk will lead), and Skagstölstind, long thought to be the highest peak in the country. There is a fine view up the Gloomy Cold Valley, and of its peaks or 'teeth'^b (*Mörke-kolde-dals-tinderne*), between which roll down three large glaciers. Do not expect to find a village or even a *sæter* at Eidsbod on the Bygdin Lake, the twin sister of Tyen, for you will very likely find yourself standing on the roof of the excavated hut, enquiring where it lies. The guide will shew you how to find and crawl into the little entrance on hands and knees: the inside is low, narrow, and filthy, filled moreover by a pungent smoke from a wood fire. Look under the log, which stretches across like a bird's perch and serves for chairs, and there will very likely be found a jar

^b *Tind*, 'a peak,' is another form of *tand*, 'a tooth;' *hø*, or *høi*, is a high mountain (generally as seen from a valley); *nuk*, or *nyp*, is a dome-shaped hill; *egg* is a ridge-backed range or 'edge' of hills; *fjeld* is the plateau on the mountain-top; *fnr* is a desolate place (generally on the mountains); *pigge* is a sharp peak, as *Gald-hø-piggen*, the sharp peak of the high mountain Gald; *horn* is the same as the Swiss *horn* in Shreck-horn, Matter-horn, applied to curved or steeple-like mountains, as Skoge-horn or Romsdals-horn; *høll* and *bjerg*, *berg* or *bjarg*, are applied to hills and low mountains.

of sour milk or a bowl of porridge, which you can eat if hungry enough; for the poor men, who lie in these huts, are most courteous to travellers, and shew no ill-bred surprise at finding a man asleep on their bed, sleeping off the effect of their supper, which they have been longing for up in the snow. I think indeed that some of these rough peasants are as good gentlemen as any that wear black coats; always carefully excluding from that number my friend Lars Twigge, the rapacious guide who conducts travellers from Nystuen to Lom. His mild extortions, however, sink into nothing compared to one, of which it is fair that others should be warned. Near the Fille Fjeld I met an Englishman with a Norwegian servant, a "douce and sonsie man," who volunteered to help my destitution and furnish me with a guide across the mountains at a moderate rate. So armed with his letter I took my leave, but before I gave it to the friend whose address it bore, I got a Norwegian gentleman to translate it into English. The beginning was quite enough: "The man who brings this letter is in want of a guide to Lom. He is English and will pay anything we ask, so charge him twenty specie dollars!" The proper pay for

this three days' walk is from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 dollars, and this scoundrel wanted to entrap me into paying £4. 10s. He aimed at too much, and his 'vaulting ambition' overleaped itself, but the example shews the spirit in which the English are too often received here. "He is an Englishman and must pay more than poor Norse people," is very often the only excuse proffered for an exorbitant bill; when you are told this to your face, as will befall you if you visit the dirty but rich farm at Skeaker, the only remedy is to tax the bill.

It is pleasant to leave the reeking 'house' to its two proper occupants in the early morning, and to get an appetite for the porridge by a bathe in the cold lake. The Meerya river must be forded a little way from the hut, and as it is deep and strong where it joins Bygdin, the shepherds catch a horse, and so with many plunges and stumbles "we win across." Passing the remains of what was once the house at Tomoldboren, we breast the hill and reach the *plateau* of Höistacken, across which the broad and shallow river of the same name runs; its bottom is covered with pebbles and flints, which makes it imperative to cross it, boots and all: I know by sad

experience that cut feet and deep maledictions have no effect on the grinning and horny-footed guide. Soon after this the track leads through a plain which recalls the description of some views in Iceland; a saucer-like hollow is strewn with jagged black boulders without a sign of vegetation, except lichen and reindeer moss. This desolate circle is surrounded in a ring by pure white peaks, Mount Galdeberg and the range of Hurungerne. A clear blue sky and an utter silence gave more strangeness to the scene, when we passed by, till a light wind arising, blew clouds of thin snow-dust across, with a very pretty effect. It takes a long time to pick out the way between the pits and blocks of stone, but the traveller is well repaid, when at last the path trends downwards between two white tracks, and he stands as it were in the gateway of this bleak Hoiranden Fell.

The green Gjendin Lake stretches away for many miles, narrowing between walls of grey rock, and at the nearer end we can see the hut, our destination, built on the spit of sand accumulated by the little rivers which accompany our rapid descent. From any point of rock we can see the giant Mount Gald-

höpiggen, and many days will pass before its white pyramid will be absent from our views. I have seen it so plainly from the Ægersdal Fell above Romsdal, that it must be visible on a clear day much farther north.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE JOTUN FJELD.

THE hut of the hunter Paulsen lies in a small hollow between the spurs of the hills, and in rough weather is very liable to be snowed-up; even on the July day when I visited it the snow was knee-deep on the hills not very far above it. The master was away, so waiving all ceremony we wrenched open the door of his wretched house. Not a scrap of food could we find except a lump of venison covered with tar and as hard as a stone, put by in the dusty roof. There was no milk or *fadbrod*, and, to crown our discomforts, it began to rain hard and we could not find any dry wood with which to make a fire. Lars began to gnaw at a very dry bone lying on the floor, while I smoked gloomily, much to his amusement, and at last went to bed without any supper. The wind blew in very freely through the wall, the deerskins above were semi-putrid, and the earth of the bed was filled with ants, so that I could only get a succession of short "sheep's sleeps." About 2 A.M. the hunters came

home from the fjeld without any game, having been on a poaching expedition against reindeer, which are not yet in season; and I was awaked by hearing Lars laughing at the Englishman who had abused the *lidt huus*, and who required "meat every day." Both the men were good fellows, though Jan suffered from some cutaneous disorder which made it rather unpleasant to eat from the same dish, as we shortly did when the afore-mentioned bucket of deer's liver and lights had been exhumed. They slept on the floor rolled in the fresh deer-skin.

"With the bleeding side out, and the hairy side in,"

it looked as if it would just have suited Bryan O'Lynn. The next day we drank some water in which the meat had boiled, and ate a trout which we caught early in the morning. The only other refreshment was the sweet goat-cheese scraped into water. It was sleeting hard when we commenced our walk, and most unwilling was Lars to move, but after a great deal of storming and threats of going alone, he grumpily took up his knapsack. A little way up the mountain is the Helle-Foss, a charming fan-shaped waterfall fed by a blue lake on the brink of the first *plâteau*. By this

time we had got to thin snow, which lay all round the lake with a pretty effect.

Before we had got to the end of the lake and commenced climbing a short ascent, a snow-storm came on, which, however, could not shut out the view of the Memuru Glacier and peaks towering on our right hand. At the top of the hill we got a fair prospect, interrupted here and there by driving clouds over the Simle Glacier, and the peaks of Skarvdal behind us. On the west towards the Justedal Glaciers and the Sogne Fjeld we could distinguish the snow-peaks of Randal, and before us were Galdhøpiggen and Glittertind, the twin monsters of the Ymes or Jötun Fjeld.

This fjeld has been from time immemorial the supposed abode of Giant Ymir, who figures in the old cosmogony as the parent of the physical world.

“ From Ymir’s corpse
Earth was made,
From his blood the sea,
From his hair the trees,
From his skull the heaven,
Of his brow the gods made
Midgard, man’s home,
From his brains came
The driving clouds.”

So says the *Voluspà*. This range has been also described in the story of Thor going out to fish with Ymir. The picture of the ravine, with black cliffs, waterfalls, and cones of snow, applies well enough to Visdal. The result of Thor's fishing is well known. He went as far as the polar ice-fields, till they "heard the krake snort in the water," and there Thor, with a bull's head for bait, hooked *Jormun-gandur*, the original sea-serpent, which held the world together in its coils. Ymir cut the line, and was killed by a buffet from the god in disguise.

An hour was spent in wading through snow about knee-deep and lying on round stones, which made walking a very precarious business; and then at the beginning of a long white slope we took leave of Paulsen, and gave him his modest fee. Lars Twigge now said that he knew his way perfectly, which seemed doubtful; but we stumbled on down snow and stones from the level of one black lake to another, till at last the snow was left behind, and there was nothing but some twenty miles of brown hill and valley to our destination. The lower part of the pass is called Uladal, and the "tinder" of the same name had risen on our left for

a long time, so that I was very glad when we turned down into the valley and left them for good. The view at this corner is very splendid. Three great cones of snow keep sentinel's watch at the head of the Visdal, the lower part of which we were to descend to the valley of Lom. On the other side of the gorge is the Yis-bræn, or glacier; and a little way on another hangs out over a cliff in mid air. This last and the three "sugar-loaves" are the Tverbotten "Horns and Glacier," a part of Galdhøpiggen. We soon came to the foot of this king of Norwegian mountains, which is 8,400 ft. high. It rises straight out of the valley, and is covered with snow to its foot; from each side a glacier has crawled till they are now exactly opposite to each other, with not much space between to prevent their meeting in time face to face. No one has ever yet seen two glaciers meet, but I suppose in this case the effect would be to turn one down into the little Visa river which runs close below. There is a marvellously clean châlet opposite to the mountain, where we stopped to get milk from the young and lately married housewife, who appeared in a most picturesque dress. It is from this house that parties start

to ascend Galdhøpiggen, which is by no means hard, to judge from the accounts given by some Oxford men in the Day-book at Rødsheim. The chief difficulty of this, as of most other Norwegian mountains, is in the multitude of round stones; sometimes these are of enormous size, sometimes just large enough to slip under the foot, but they are equally unpleasant in all cases.

At nightfall we ended our long walk by the river-side at Rødsheim, a pleasant little inn in Lom parish, which was not then completed, but which ought by this time to be the resort of many travellers. Olaf Halvørsen the landlord is a clever and obliging man, who told me that he guided people over the pass to Fille Fjeld for about one-third of what Lars had got from me. I was tired and foot-sore, and the next day was rainy, so I spent it in a lazy way. After discussing a huge bacon-omelette, followed by pancakes and cheese, and looking through an American illustrated paper, I hobbled up the valley of the Bever River, which joins the Visa at this place, both being feeders of the Vaage Lake close by. This stream owes its name to an abundance of beavers in former times, (whence Bever-

dal, Bever-thun, &c.), but they are extinct now. Except in the wildest parts of Thelemarken and (it is said) a secluded part of Gudbrandsdal, none have been seen for a long time. If they were not extinct in other parts, this populous and thriving parish of Lom would hardly be the place for them. In 1845 the Stor-thing passed a law forbidding any one to kill a beaver for ten years, but the rule came too late. There were no trout at Rödshiem, but Halvörsen said that there were plenty in a lake a few miles up Bever-dal; the water at Rödshiem is too cold and fresh from the glaciers for fish.

The landlord was an original in his way. He taught himself English by reading "Jacob Faithful" in the long winter evenings, and it was odd to hear a real person talk somewhat in the style of Captain Marryat's nautical heroes. I have heard that the Danes are more fond of Marryat's books than of any others, but I did not before know that they had entered the remote Norwegian valleys. Halvörsen's language was corrected and rendered less special and technical by constant study of the American papers which I mentioned. The rage felt here for information about America is surprising; and I

have often been puzzled in my geography before some Norseman discoursing glibly of the most out-of-the-world states and territories. They seem also to possess a special talent for learning English. It is not very uncommon to find boys teaching themselves our language by listening to the travellers whose horses they drive, and by asking each person to contribute a mite to his little store of English words. The girl at Maristuen and her cousin Ole at Nystuen, are both examples of this industrious and clever sort who have been their own tutors. Halvörsen's chief wish in accompanying travellers is to learn something by talking English to them, and he is therefore quite content with very moderate pay. I think I gave him from eighteen-pence to two shillings when he walked with me, and he certainly was most useful. When we started he was to have had still less, and I was to pay for his food, but the charge was so exorbitant at the first place where we slept, that he begged to find his own food and have a little more pay. He almost cried at the idea of my being so grossly cheated; that, however, is such a rare occurrence in this country that one does not mind it now and then for a change.

We set off next morning up Lomseggen, a fine mountain over six thousand feet high, from the shoulder of which we got a good sight of the next snow mountain, Tondrabrand, but the day was too dark to see the peaks of the Lang Fjeld or Snæhattan. Halvorsen was very chatty, and curious to know all my opinions; indeed, I thought he carried his curiosity a little too far, when I woke and found him sitting on my bed at his house, reading my journal. I took it from him and told him to go and look after breakfast, but he begged that he might carry away my note-book with him! There appeared to be a good many *ryper* on Lomseggen, but we saw nothing else. My guide told me of the frequent attempts to keep reindeer on this mountain, which had all failed. The wolf and the lynx were too much for them. The Norwegian name for the latter beast is expressive of its crawling ways; *gaupe*, a 'lynx,' is derived from *gaufe*, an old word meaning 'to creep.' A good many skins are got about here in winter and sold in Bergen, where lynx-fur commands a good price.

After a moderately long walk we got to Skeaker for supper, where the hostess, though rich, was ex-

ceedingly filthy. She grumbled very much at having to cook the grouse which we brought in, and said that eggs were quite enough for our dinner. I rashly bid her cook all the eggs in the house as well, and to my dismay when dinner came up it proved to be a brace of grouse and thirty-six boiled eggs! We utilized them by boiling them harder to eat on our walk next day. A bowl of thick *öl* was brought in, which I could hardly taste after having been accustomed to get either good Bavarian beer or good milk and cream. After dinner we were glad to jump into our beds without waiting to have the meal cleared away, and I slept till I was awaked by the unfamiliar sound of a church bell and a buzz of Sunday-school children. My hostess, in the same dirty garment as yesterday, was sitting on my bed, not liking to wake me, and yet anxious to see the Englishman perform his toilette. She appeared to have forgotten that Saturday in Norsk is called Washing-day, *Lordag*, or *Laur-dag*, from the plan of our common forefathers of taking their cleaning only once a-week. The church was near the house, and to-day was its turn for service; it had also come round to this particular farm to hold the Sunday class in its big

room. The schoolmaster seemed an intelligent fellow; he was one of the circulating masters, billeted in turn on different farmers and paid by their contribution. He spoke of the priest of Lom, and said that he was considered a rich and learned man; he had £250 a-year, and could read *Latinsk*. The wandering schoolmasters are billeted for fifteen days in the year in the house of each farmer, where there are no fixed schools. After his departure the work of education still goes on under the superintendence of the priest, with a visit from the bishop every four or five years. In many parts reading-clubs (*læseselskaber*) have been formed by the peasants. They subscribe to buy books, which rotate among the families which belong to the club.

This valley is very fertile, and from the brink of Lomseggen I thought it looked like a glorious oasis in a desert. Little farms were clustered and dotted all along the space which I saw of about fifteen miles long by four wide. So seems to have thought King Olaf the Saint, who marched down Loordal and slept at a farm called Bover (? Bever) in Lesje parish. But when he saw the bright river Otta flowing between the farms of Loar (Lom), he

thought it would be a thousand pities to ravage such a pleasant region. However, he did not go away till all the people round about Lom, Beverdal, Vaage, and Lesje became Christian, and even old Sir Gudbrand himself had come over to the White Christ's faith when his great gold idol had been demolished by Olaf's orders.

The river runs from the Vaage Vand to the sea, and from the other end of the lake a stream joins the Logen, which falls into the Christiania Fjord. It is curious that there should be in Norway so many examples of this phænomenon (always before considered impossible): it was held that when a river ran from each end of a lake, one must soon gain on the other and so get all the water for itself.

We strolled up the hills on the other side of the Otta river in the afternoon, and I was much pleased with the sight of the Aura river falling over a very high scarp of rock from a basin of the same name, of a good size. The Haalangen fells on which we were now walking are not very interesting; they consist of long bleak expanses of moor, very stony, and with a little snow in some parts, but only in the shade of a peak or a cleft. I saw a few snipe

here but no more grouse, and began to think them the dullest places in which I had ever been. There was absolutely nothing to look at but the heaps of stones which marked the way. Behind us lay Lomseggen and Tondrabrand, and to the west one could make out the mountains which overhang the Lyster Fjord peering through clouds, but we could not see the Ymes Fjeld. It did not take many hours to reach the châteaux in Loordal, where I intended to pass the night. We scrambled down a steep hill covered with Scotch firs to get to them. The descents into the narrow valleys, or rather defiles, is sometimes very precipitous, and more unpleasant than any amount of climbing up or walking on the level. However, at last we got down without spraining our ankles, and found that we could be received into the hut of one Johan Johansen Rudi; Halvørsen went on to Lesje, about fourteen miles off, to enquire about a hunter who could shew us reindeer between Loordal and Romsdal, and I set to work at cleaning the rusty and clumsy old rifle, a hundred years old, which I had borrowed from Halvørsen's uncle at Rödshim. The girl was blowing her *lure* to call the cattle, which came crowding

round her for a lick of salt, forming a pretty pastoral scene, which one could enjoy the more from the cleanliness of the hut, in the doorway of which I smoked and looked out for Olaf.

CHAPTER XVII.

LOORDAL.

TOWARDS evening the landlord came back with a fine-looking man, whom he introduced as Ole Olesen Bjukna the hunter. He was my companion for about a week, and was one of the pleasantest and most intelligent men whom I had the good fortune to meet in Norway. No information came amiss to him, and his questions (when he was encouraged to talk) were often about English politics, the Armstrong guns, iron-plated ships, and such like topics, which I had not expected a Norwegian reindeer-hunter to care much about. One finds, however, that the lowest classes here take an interest in England and her doings. In many of the meanest huts were flaming pictures of the Siege of Sebastopol, and the Queen of England at a review; one old man was very proud of possessing a picture of the late Prince Consort in a General's uniform riding by himself at Osborne. The *skyds* boys have a stock of questions about England, the sameness of which proves their common interest in

the subject as well as their lack of originality. They usually catechise the traveller in this manner. "Are you English?" "Do you know London?" "Have you seen Hull and the great Humber Fjord?" If a lady is with him, they are sure to add, "Is that your sister or your wife?" "How long have you been married?"

After forming a rough estimate of the ages and good looks of the travellers, their conversation flags, until a prospect of 'trading' brightens it again. The boy bids for your ring, knife, or book; tries to take off your hat to see how it is made, asks for the loan of your pipe, and offers to sell anything or everything which he possesses, down to the whip which does not belong to him. It is amusing sometimes to let them run on in this way, but it is just to say that they are easily checked. An admonition to mind their own business produces a stare of astonishment, and then a jerk round toward the horses and a comfortable spell of silence in the loquacious driver. When the Englishman travels in his well-appointed carriage they can put no bounds to their respect for the important and rich foreigner. They certainly expatiate on "rich Eng-

lish, poor Norsemen," till one longs to make them comprehend, if it were possible, that there is no absolute necessity for one's purse being full enough to pay double for everything, and that very often there is only just enough in it to take one decently to the end of the journey. But when they meet the traveller with dusty thick boots, knapsack and walking-stick, their note is changed. If this Englishman were rich enough (they think), he would go in a carriage or *calèche* like every other decent person. Thus I have several times been asked, when making pedestrian expeditions, by some old man of whom I got a draught of milk, "What is your trade? Are you a shoemaker, tinker, tailor," &c. ? "If not a bagman, why don't you go in a carriage?" "What do you sell in England?" I happened to tell a gentleman one day that I intended to go to the bar, within hearing of the servant, and was amused to hear them discussing me soon afterwards as "only a *Candidatus Juris*," a grade of studentship not very much respected. There is very little prestige about the Norwegian University men, so that they can hardly understand the apparent wealth and ease of the Oxford and Cam-

bridge parties which assemble here to shoot, fish, and be idle.

There was not much to be done now that Bjukna had come, till next morning, so we only went out and chose a sheep to take with us up to the fell. This is a plan which I cordially recommend to all who mean to stay a few days in this pleasant part of the country: a sheep costs from four to six shillings, a young lamb or kid much less. I picked out a fat fellow just grown out of his lambhood, and bought it of the girl who owned it for four shillings, after a long bargaining. She stipulated that the skin should be returned to her, which Halvörsen promised should be done, and we then cemented the bargain with a glass of brandy passed round. It was curious to see how the little sister, perhaps eight years old, took her turn at the raw spirit without winking. As for old Madame Rudi, she was not too proud to ask for more at bedtime. Halvörsen had got me a large bottle of it from some relations near Lomseggen, who had charged me nothing for it, and would not even take any little present in return.

These Loordal *sæters* are very clean; the bed looked

inviting and the floor was sprinkled afresh with fir and juniper twigs by the 'lily maid.' The only drawback was that there was no second room. Some dairy pans indeed were kept in a damp cupboard without a door, but that was not a desirable bedroom for any one, so the little girl and a small cowboy were billeted there for the night, and the rest of us, Halvörsen, Bjukna, the old Mrs. Rudi, the Mademoiselle Rudi who sold her pet lamb, and another grown-up girl, name unknown, had to sleep in the one small room, into which the children's legs projected from their cupboard.

I was rather appalled at the idea, and wondered how much oxygen there would be here by the morning, but they said, that a few months before they had entertained a bride and bridegroom on their wedding tour, two travelling Danes, and various guides and servants, in the same little room. The old lady became very affable as she sat by the fire smoking some of my English tobacco and moistening it with Halvörsen's *brændevin*.

It was curious, that both she and Olaf belonged to the *gjæv*, or ancient nobility, which sank into the body of the peasantry under the Danish oppres-

sions. A great proportion of the Stor-thing of 1821 must have belonged to this peasant nobility, so that it was really self-denying of them to abolish, instead of renewing, hereditary rank, in the face of two vetoes from the king. All ranks, however, are now equally proud of having shewn the Swedes that Norway has power to manage her own affairs.

These old families seem to have kept some of their substantial prosperity about them even when fallen on these evil days, if we may judge by those whom we meet by the highroads. Farmer Green in Hallingdal, Torp or Tuf in Hemsedal, Halvörsen in Rodsham, and these Rudis or Raudis in Loordal, are all well-off, and superior to the average of their class.

Without believing their anecdotes of the descendants of the *gjæv* being distinguishable in any crowd by their mien and features, we may yet quite conceive that the custom of reciting pedigrees and keeping shields or documents to prove their long descent, may make these people haughty and independent, while the remains of their old wealth will give them a prosperous well-to-do look, to distinguish them from their neighbours in certain

cases. Any one who has visited Mr. Tofte in Gudbrandsdal will acknowledge that his tremendous pride in being as it were "premier baron" of this extinct nobility, has affected his look and manner very considerably. One does not often see coats of arms in Norway now-a-days, but they do exist on rings and wooden scutcheons. I bought a silver signet from a peasant, which had engraved neatly on it a shield, bearing a ship and some letters; this was surmounted by a crest, a mailed arm holding a sword. I believe that about midsummer time, as well as at marriages and funerals, the pedigree is brought out and studied by the collected family.

Most of the old names were taken from the farm in which the original *odelsmand* had lived, just as now the peasants have no fixed surname at all, but take the name of the house at which they live, added to a patronymic made from their father's Christian name. Thus an Ole who lives at Nystuen would sign himself Ole Nystuen, and his sons Per and Lars would be Lars Olesen Nystuen and Per Olesen Nystuen. In the same way a girl would be called Olesdatter. These young ladies have often very high-sounding names, e. g. Serena

Asbiornsdatter, or Ingebjorga Michaelsdatter, and so on. But if one of the sons goes to another farm, he straightway changes his title to that of the new farm, and so all the members of one family may have different names. Thus old Sigrid Brændhaugen is the mother of Simon Jerkin on the Dovre Fjeld. All this makes occasional family gatherings to consider the pedigree quite necessary. Of course the older families do not change their names with their houses. The fact that some of the nobles were called *Philipsen*, *Johansen*, *Nelson*, &c., shews that they date from the passing of that law in Denmark when every one was compelled to adopt some fixed surname for the convenience of the registrars. From that time all the Olesens, Nelsons, and Hansens, *cum multis aliis*, who lived in the towns were fixed, while the country people went on as before. Many of the 'noble' names are amusing in their simplicity: Crab, Crow, Bud, Back, Bin, Brat, Cup, Cold, Butter, Hog, Red, White, Black, Window, Teist (oyster-catcher), Stump, Stoneroad, are some of the oldest. Others are evidently taken from places, as Medelbye and Melhuus ('the middle house,' a place near Trondhjem), Thorp,

'a village,' and Tofte (from *þopte* in Gudbrandsdal). Others point to historical or legendary stories, as Ormsen, 'the dragon's son,' Thunder-star and Thunder-shield, Söbiörn, 'the sea bear,' Lioldhorn, 'the horn of the people,' Vikingssen, 'son of the Viking.' Any one who will go over a list of the old families with an Icelandic dictionary will find many curiosities in nomenclature, as well as the original form of the surnames of many families in England. The absurd Danish custom of dropping the simple family name and assuming poetical compounds of lilies, roses, crowns, shields, and palm-trees, seems to have taken root in Norway. At least we find mention in Pontoppidan of such families as Lily-shield, Lion-helmet, and Crown of Roses. There are also a good many Scotch and German names in the Bergen-stift, and a few Danish in all parts. The name of Halvörsen's farm, Rödshelm, looks as if it had been the property of these same Rudis, or Röds (the family used both forms of the old Raudi, 'red'), whose descendants are living (unconscious thereof) in Loordal.

At nine o'clock we all made preparations for sleeping, the women taking the solitary bed and the men lying round the fire on coats and knapsacks. In

such a mixed company the ceremony of undressing was dispensed with, though when no strangers are present men and women undress regularly and sleep in cribs round the room. It is curious, when the traveller knocks them up in the middle of the night, to see the family sitting up all round the room in their beds, like rabbits looking out of their holes. In Thelemarken they are still more primitive, and the guest will often have to sleep in the hay with all the rest. But in these more civilized parts there is always a guest-room, except in mere cottages or *sæters*.

Next morning I commissioned Halvørsen to convey the sheep to Ny Sæter a few miles off, while Bjukna and I took a walk to look for reindeer. We got splendid views over the Lang Fjeld all day, but no signs of deer except occasional cropped stalks of *ranunculus glacialis*, which shewed that they had been there the day before. At last the dog began to snuff about and pull at his string, and we saw a great quantity of "spohr." The dog led us a long way until we were opposite a glorious snow-mountain called Digerkampen, from which a large glacier came down into a lake. The ice was very

thick, and in some places had been cut into cliffs which hung over the Gröna Vand. On peeping down we saw a herd of about sixty reindeer; one buck with large branching antlers stood as sentinel, the others were grazing among the light-coloured does and yellow fawns. Altogether it was a pretty sight, on which I should look back with unmixed pleasure if we had been lucky enough to get a pair of horns. There was a flat stone from which we might have fired, but just as we were both crouching under its insufficient cover we were seen or suspected, and the sentinel gave the alarm. We had nothing to do but to jump up and fire at them as they mounted the glacier: I missed, and Bjukna, who was a dead shot, stupidly waited till they were out of all range. The reason he gave was that he thought it a pity to separate the herd, and therefore waited to fire till they were all together again. We had nothing now to do but to plod back to Ny Sæter rather discomfited. Bjukna said that we were sure to see some more next day; and so we did, but we never got another shot that week.

I think that any one could get a deer on these

moors if he could manage to sleep out and follow the herd for two or three days. If he must go back to the *sæter* every night his chances are very doubtful indeed. Bjukna did not get another shot while he was with me, and was very much disgusted. The week afterwards he followed a herd night and day, and excited my envy by shooting six in four days. These hills between Romsdal and Lom, including those which skirt Romsdal on both sides, are the best for stalking; on the Dovre Fjeld and in the Rundane mountains the reindeer are so much hunted by English and Norwegians alike, that they are very shy. There are several holes and stone huts on the Tverfjeld called *jagers' buer*, where one might pass the night, and a little food in the pocket, and moss to make a fire, would complete the list of necessaries.

After our long and fruitless walk we were glad to get back to the Ny Sæter, a comfortable place kept by a buxom farmer's daughter from Lesje. There were two huts, so that we were able to get one all to ourselves, while the herd-boy and dairy-maids occupied the other. Halvörsen had cooked us an excellent dinner of stewed mutton and potatoes,

which a bowl of cream made perfect. The whole party of Norwegians came in to eat their porridge and smoke round the fire, and we had a very merry evening. My two guides rigged up a bed for themselves with some planks and a rug, and I found to my surprise that the bed was clean and soft.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HAALANGEN FELLS (continued).

WAKING early next day, I found that the good-natured Bjukna had gone off a mile or two to catch some trout for my breakfast, in which he succeeded, but I could not tempt these frugal people to taste either the fish stewed in cream or the kidneys, on the cookery of which I rather plumed myself. However, I found that I was considered eccentric to eat such "strange meats."

After breakfast my guides beguiled the way to Sondre Bjerget by asking for full details of the fight between Sayers and Heenan, of which the Norsk papers had published exciting accounts. In going up the side of a hill called Jehan's Hö, I noticed some large stones laid across others set upright in the ground. It was certainly artificial, but it looked much too solid to be merely a hut to shelter benighted hunters. It turned out to be very old, having been a hiding-place for crossbowmen, who could not hope to stalk the reindeer, and so laid in ambush for them at the point where the

herd usually crossed the valley. Bjukna said, that though the deer had become very shy since rifles became common, they still (if undisturbed) will cross the valley at the same place day after day, choosing the narrowest part. He ought to know about their habits, having been a professional *jager* all his life, and (as he says) having killed four hundred. It is a hard, but very profitable life. The skins are in great repute with the leather merchants, and the farmers round about are always ready to buy the meat. On Leirs-hö we saw four deer, and tracked them all day till sunset, when as we trudged along with rifles in their leather cases, Bjukna suddenly dropped as if he had been shot, and I followed his example. There was a little tract of snow in front of us about two hundred yards across, and at the other end of the snow were the reindeer. They had doubled and come round the hill, so that we met face to face. Of course they went off like the wind, while I sat down and watched them till they were mere specks on the snow of the opposite hill. In the dearth of living creatures on the fjeld, a gray fox sculking along was worth putting into one's journal; we saw nothing else.

Bjukna said that the best place for deer was the Ægersdals Fjeld, on the other side of Molmen (eighteen miles off), and that for bears he considered Trædal to be the best. He acknowledged that near Veblungsnæs they had been shot, and had heard great things of Sætersdal and Surendal (where the peasant lived who killed 372 brown and 3 white bears); but Trædal he considered to be the most promising place for a shot.

The views continue to be very fine. Galdhøpiggen glitters as bright as ever, but the most striking object is the fantastic Pupuatind, or Skjorten. Imagine a huge horn covered with snow all over, even on the inside curve. It is the most curiously shaped mountain that I have ever seen, hardly excepting the Matterhorn, and must be of a great height. The peasants say that it has never been ascended. On reaching Ny Sæter I found that Halvørsen had packed his bag, and was preparing to start on his journey home. We parted very cordially, though but little money passed between us. He begged me to mention him if I ever wrote about Norway, and recommend him to future travellers, which inasmuch as he is very useful, amusing,

cheap, and a good hand at English, I can conscientiously do. He would not take back a little glass, which had been useful to me in dipping water up from the pools, but made me keep it as a souvenir. I afterwards gave it to a nice old lady in Gudbrandsdal, who asked me to a very pleasant coffee-party on the strength of it.

Next morning we set out by a circuitous route to Mølmen, over a very bleak moor. It was a clear day, and the white peaks scattered in various parts of the horizon and clustered together in the Lang Fjeld in our front, made the walk most pleasant: I was sorry indeed to see the last of Digerkampen, and that glacier lake that was so like the Marjälän See by the Aletsch Horn, with its walls of ice. Some large hawks were quartering the ground after *ryper*, like pointers, but did not find any while we were near. On another day a goshawk killed a fine bird for my supper. We followed the stream which flows from Gröna Vand, and got near Molmensdal at last, with frequent stoppages on account of the intense heat, and execrations against the myriads of mosquitoes.

Just before the final descent we stopped to get a

bowl of cream at a *shieling*, in which sat an old granny on a cowskin, and the most *décolletée* young person that I ever saw. Her costume was a skirt, surmounted by a handkerchief as far as her neck, and nothing else. The toilette of the country-women is never very complicated; one long-sleeved garment serves to adorn them by night and day, and the traveller sees it converted into full dress by the lady jumping into a skirted bodice with loops for the arms. Of course this is not their grand dress, such for instance as they don in the *sæters* on Saturday evenings, when their lovers come to see them from distant farms. They are then very smart and gay. The girls say that they could not possibly endure the lonely life on the mountain for three months if their friends might not come to see them sometimes. The custom is, however, considered injudicious, and has even been formally prohibited by the Government, by a law specially directed against *Natte-freierei*. However, the fell-folk do not attend much to the game-laws or any other regulations laid down to restrain their amusements. The laws which are most respected are those which divide the fine between the informer and the poor of the parish, when any reindeer are



killed before August, or more than one elk on a farm per annum.

The charge for our cream, about a gallon, was only twopence. In reality there is no price small enough for a draught of milk or cream where so many cows are kept, but some houses by the high-roads attempt to get twopence or threepence for every basin of *sud-mjolk*. The imposition is worth resisting, if, like me, you have an "exposition of thirst" which necessitates a basin every stage in hot weather. The mountain cream, I believe, gains its delicious flavour from the reindeer moss; sometimes the gentian gives it a bitter taste, and then the peasants think it most wholesome. We saw a good many wild ducks in the stream by Mølmen farm, which did not take much notice of us. One actually swam up to the boat one day while I was paddling in the Rauma, near Veblungsnæs. It was a beautiful evening, and we went down with Mølmen himself to fish, but without much success, though he said that the river was full of trout.

This is a fine large house, with pleasant people, but nothing to eat. However, we managed to dine off pickled *sild* (young herrings) and bread and

cheese, and were glad to taste *bayersk öl* again. After dinner the host brought us in some spirit in a quaint glass jug, which he assured us was very "stark." As its strength consisted merely in being saturated with peppercorns, we did not trouble it. There is only one liquor in Norway nastier than this *peber-spiritus*, and that is brandy half filled up with liquorice.

There was no light literature to be got, the only book being one singularly inappropriate to the Norwegians, who are all good men merciful to their beasts: it was a tract setting forth the punishments which fell on some cruel carter, and was called *Vær ikke haard paa Dyrene*, 'Be not hard upon the Beasts.' I then bethought me of the waterfall, much praised by Mr. Bennett, and enquired about it of the servant, who said that there were a great many "fosses," but none called Mølmen-Fos in particular. However, on going round to the front of the house I saw it staring me in the face, about a quarter of a mile off, and a short scramble brought me to it. It is a fine straight fall, which has hollowed out a deep black basin for itself, in which it makes a wonderful roaring. On leaving the house with Bjukna in

the morning the host would not make any charge. I thought that he did it on the principle of a London cabman's "Leave it to you, Sir," when he thinks that you are likely not to know the fare: I therefore only gave him about what the things cost, and thought that he looked disappointed. We made very good friends about a fortnight later, when I paid him for some Hamburg cigars, which I forgot before. I believe that all the farmers in this part of Norway are well-to-do people, who neither want to receive travellers nor to make any profit by them. Many of them complain of the necessity of keeping the "station" when their turn comes round to be at the mercy of all wayfarers as to their food, horses, and beds. Yet it is wonderful to see how kind and cheerful they will be if one is obliged to knock up the house at two or three o'clock on an autumn night, when rushing down the road to catch the English boat at Christiania: and it is this good-humour and kindness in the people which makes it so hard to keep away from Norway in the summer, when one has once visited them.

We went up the *Ægersdals Fjeld* after breakfast

in the hope of finding some deer at last, and in the certainty of a fine prospect. Our course lay across a large patch of veritable red snow. The colour was not very brilliant, but unmistakeable even at a little distance. It appeared to be caused by the presence of very minute plants or seeds. Just by the waterfall the dog put up a fine old blackcock, the only one I saw for a long time, though with a setter there ought not to be any difficulty in finding a few. We had the pleasure of seeing two bucks going in the right direction, and followed them for some hours, though a touch of neuralgia took away most of my pleasure in the chase. As a matter of course we never got up to them, and could not stay out on the fjeld that night, from my twisting my ankle in coming down the side of Stor Hö, a peak from which I had a view which repaid all our troubles. There was not much snow on it, but it was hard work climbing over the round pebbles and boulders which composed its side. We could not see Romsdal, which was hidden by the neighbouring Bröste Fjeld, but beyond extended the peaks, pinnacles, and horns of the Lang Fjeld: far away we could distinguish the cones of the

Ymes Fjeld, and to the east Snæhattan crowned the long black Dovre range. The coast hills opened here and there enough to shew silver strips of fjord; altogether it was a view hard to find out of Norway—gloomy, grand, and melancholy. On the other side was a long snow-field, down which we glissaded, and here I unfortunately twisted my ankle. I managed to hobble down the sides of the hill to a farm called Branli, where we demanded hospitality, which was responded to by ushering us into a splendid blue-painted guest-room, in which a *ragoût* of reindeer was served up in half-an-hour, during which the farmer smoked a pipe with me. They were very kind, and made us both extremely comfortable for the night, refusing all payment in the morning. The matter being at last arranged by tipping the children and the *pige* the proper amount, we started in a *stol-kjærre* (springless cart) back to Mölmen, where I took leave of Bjukna, and delivered back the rifle which I had borrowed. I did not see him again, though I called at his house in Holseth on my return journey; his wife told me that he was so irritated by our bad luck that he had gone for a long expedition after

a herd of deer, of which he got six, as I heard afterwards.

Soon after leaving Nystuen, the next station, Romsdal fairly begins. The beauty of this valley has not been at all exaggerated in the numerous descriptions which have been given of it, and the Rauma river makes some glorious falls, especially one called Sondre Slette Foss, by the roadside; here the river falls down into a black beaker, which it has worn in the rock. Opposite the station-house at Ormem a large stream comes down obliquely from Stor-hattan, a mountain over our heads, but not visible from the road. A path leads up by the waterfall and through a wood on to the fjeld, where there is a little moor well worth a visit, even if the visitor does not climb Stor-hattan, whence he will have much the same view, as I have described from Stor Hö. There are some comfortable *sæters*, maintaining about fifty cows, which wander on the moor and in the copses which run up the sides of the snow-mountains enclosing it. I walked there with a friend who was anxious to try the merits of this nook in the matter of *ryper*, and he got several brace in a short time; indeed, they were more

plentiful here than in any part in which I have been. In one of the little copses the pointer betrayed uneasiness at certain 'spohr,' which on examination proved to be the footprints of a large bear, a dangerous neighbour to the fifty cows; unless, indeed, he was one of old Pontoppidan's grass-bears. All about were other tokens of his presence, broken twigs, footprints, and fresh droppings. That was all we ever saw of him. Another friend of mine traced a bear at Aurland on the Sogne Fjord, to a mossy cliff surmounted by trees, to which the bear made a safe retreat, where the sportsmen lost him, not being able to get up the rock, down which hung the moss in strips, torn up by the bear's claws. There is so much talk of bears in all books on Norway, that I will say very little about them, and not repeat twice-told stories. I waited for a few days of rain and wind near Veblungsnæs, intending to go up to the *sæter* (where an English gentleman lately shot a bear), but had to give up the idea, and dismiss Jorgen Ericson unproved. He is said to be a very good hunter, though old, and his charge per diem (half a dollar) is much less exorbitant than the prices which are often asked of the English. The

guide-books recommend a man near Skie, in Valdres, as a good attendant in sporting expeditions; his fee is *a dollar a day and all the game!* Half a dollar is about the proper amount, though Norwegians would give less.

The plan generally adopted with bears is this. Two men lie out at night in the grass or bushes near the wood which he is known to frequent. Some people put a bait for Bruin, but this is not usual. When he appears, a shot from one of the *two* rifles which each man should carry will bring him charging and growling on all fours, and as he rises on his hind legs to come to close quarters, his fate is settled. Of course if he is once missed there will be no second shot at a bear that night. They are said to be very shy, and to run off at the slightest sound or strange smell. There was a Lapp who had great success with them near the Namsen; he formed a lane of bushes, up which the bear rushed on to a concealed pike, while the Lapp gave him 'the other barrel.' The Norwegians, as a rule, prefer killing the bears in large parties in the early spring; when one is found in his winter quarters, the owner of the land (who is Bruin's

legal master) sends round for all the neighbours, and they massacre the beast as he appears rubbing his eyes at the mouth of his cave, whence he has been disturbed by an echoing rifle-shot. Regular hunters, however, prefer to work alone, or with one companion; they are often very plucky, and scorn to take too many advantages over their game. A man in Lesje, who made a six-shooting rifle for bears, got most terribly laughed at for his prudence.

Bears are not often seen out of Sæterdalen, though it is not long since an officer shot a mother and two whelps in Osterdal, and a student of my acquaintance told me that he had seen one asleep on the further side of a small stream. "I crawled off as quiet as could be," he added. I do not know why he did not raise the neighbourhood, there being always people willing to get the Government head-money, a valuable skin (often worth £2), and a quantity of good bear-beef for nothing. Perhaps he agreed with a Norwegian who had seen the English gentleman kill his bear in Romsdal, and who said to me, "It is not at all fine to see the bear coming, I can say, sir."

CHAPTER XIX.

ROMSDAL AND THE DOVRE FJELD.

AT Horgheim the best part of Romsdal begins. The Rauma rushes along, now and then expanding into large pale-green pools, now shooting over a rock with a prodigious noise and foam. The salmon come up as far as the fall at Horgheim: the fishing is strictly preserved, and belongs to an English gentleman who lives a little lower down the valley. However, the Lensmand used to let the fishing of two or three pools to chance visitors at half-a-crown a-day; I do not know if he still retains the privilege. The chief feature of the road as far as Fladmark is the succession of cascades from the cliff above the road. Five are of especial beauty; one sliding over the rocks, and expanding like a fan near the road: another shooting out a multitude of "water-rockets," to use one of Murray's expressions. I walked with two pedlars as far as Fladmark, most intelligent fellows, curious about England to the last degree: but one ought to walk the last bit to Aak alone, between the Romsdalshorn

and the Goblin Peaks (*Troldtinderne*). The horn is wonderful; it is almost a perfect spire of 4,000 feet high, never but once ascended, and wherever one goes it seems quite close. The best view of it is from the garden at Aak, that pleasant house of resort for the English. It is always full, and the visitors' book is full of enthusiastic praises of the host and his daughters, which they well deserve. What curious things people write in these visitors' books! One gentleman writes that he is "in company of a young Fröken from England;" another, a lady, has added "the gifted" to the name of a certain clergyman wherever it occurred. A pedantic enthusiast burst into indifferent Italian in one page—"Ho visto Romsdalen e potevo morire, ma voglio vivere per viderlo ancora!" To which another had added the sensible postscript, "O du af cacoethes scribendi haardt plagede!" 'O thou, with itch of scribbling sorely plagued!' Of course there are many long comparisons of Romsdal to Glencoe, and other Scotch valleys, indignantly refuted by idle and patriotic English people; and a great variety of rubbish of all kinds. I think the joke of which one gets most sick is the announce-

ment that so-and-so has gone on with "the Apostles' horses," i.e. on foot.

Romsdal has been the scene of many fights. King Inge had a battle royal with his northern subjects at the Rauma Thing, in which he came best off, and made peace. Afterwards the Raumsdälir fell under the influence of Sir Gudbrand (after whom the valley is named), and were staunch heathens till the adventurer Olaf made them swallow Christianity.

The feuds in those old days were no slight matter, the *vendetta* often lasting for several generations, as the Njals Saga shews. When peace was made between two bonders who had a feud, an oath of peace was taken, which guarded against all possible treacheries by sea or land with legal accuracy and voluminousness. I will try to give an idea of *part* of one of the oaths, an account of which is given in Wormius and Resenius. One Gretter, in Iceland, had been compelled to fly to the fjelds by his enemies, where he dwelt in a lonely islet for some time; feeling a desire for society he ventured to come to the public games in disguise, and being challenged to wrestle, exacted an oath of peace from his former

enemies, under the assumed name of Guest. They were willing enough to promise safety to a stout fellow and good wrestler as the Guest seemed to be, and Goat, his principal enemy, swore that peace should remain between them, their agnates and cognates, male and female, their servants and friends. "Any one who breaks it shall be cursed and driven out from men wherever God is worshipped, idols receive blood, and wild beasts are hunted."

"While fire flames
Earth grows green,
Babe calls mother,
Or mothers bear babes,
While ships slide,
While shields gleam,
Sun shines in summer,
Or snow lies a-winter nights,
While the Finn flashes by*,
While pine-tree waxeth,
Hawk hovereth in spring day,
With wind on his two wings,
While earth is tilled,
And wind leads water seaward,
While carles corn sow,—
Be he far from church and priest,

* The Finn wizards were supposed to leave their bodies at home, and rush about the world.

And hiding-place of heathen,
House and hole of the rock,
And from all worlds
Save hell."

This is only one of the clauses of the oath which the Goat swore to Gretter, but when he threw off his cloak and stood confessed, the traitor wanted to break it and incur all the penalties. However, Gretter returned to his islet, and having drawn up his long ladder, was safe from all attacks.

Aak is really a most pleasant place, and few who stay there one night can summon up courage to leave its comforts for several days. I stayed there for some time, having found a college friend who had leave to fish in the Rauma. At last, finding that the weather would not clear, I dismissed old Eric the hunter, and drove up the beautiful valley again towards the Dovre Fjeld. Near Lesje Iron-works the road passes a chain of green lakes, connecting (as was said before) the Christiania Fjord and the North Sea by the streams running from either end. It was late in the evening as I passed the last of them, with its horse-shoe eyots enclosing regular lagoons like the coral islands. The sunsets

are peculiarly beautiful in this clear climate, and I thought I had never seen any so fine as on this night. The western sky behind me over Romsdal was full of bright clouds, and in front was entirely rose-coloured with their reflection, which lit up the snow on some distant fells, with a pretty *abendglimmer*. When night came on the Aurora began to play, shooting up a pillar of light under its great white arch, and at about 11 o'clock a brilliant meteor fell over a lake below us, and burst into green fire, like a rocket. I was sorry when my drive was over at Dombaas, and stood for a long time at the gate watching the Aurora, which had now assumed a form quite new to me. Instead of one arch with a vaguely-defined brush or pillar of light waving under it, there were two arches and two pillars, side by side. The people of the house said that it was an unusual form for it to take, but they evidently look on all curiosity about such an ordinary phenomenon as utterly futile. The skyds-boy was thoroughly puzzled when I asked him if he thought it a fine sight, then stared at it and said "No!"

Dombaas is a large and comfortable house, with

accommodation for many travellers. It would not be a bad place for a family to lodge at for a short time, if the people of the house would take lodgers. It is close to the Dovre Fjeld, and is reported to have fair shooting and fishing of its own. The people are well off, civil, and attentive, which would make it a far more agreeable resting-place than Fogstuen, the next station, where there are more *ryper* but fewer comforts.

To Fogstuen I proceeded next day, up steep hills, with fine views over the lakes and the river which I had passed last night. The road leads through a wood, which is so far interesting that it grows upon the limit of the fir, and is the last which one sees for several days except small birch-shrubs and dwarf-willows. The house at Fogstuen ('the fog-house,' or 'the house by the foggy river,' *Fogs-aae*) is tolerably clean, but the station-master is dirty and an evident drunkard, and the women-folk uncivil and careless. Not having any particular reason for going on to Jerkin at once, I took a long walk on the moor, and studied the outline of Snæhättan from a mossy knoll near the house. It is a mountain in ruins, an amphitheatre broken down on one side and half filled

with snow and glaciers. It does not look its height, 7,700 ft., (about half that height from the table-land,) but still is very weird-looking and grand. It was terribly hot, and the ground was covered with flowers, so that the bleak desert plateau round Snæhättan, within an easy walk, formed a curious background to the view. It was close by this place that the friend, whom I left in Romsdal, shot a reindeer while out grouse-shooting. At the top of a little hill was a rock, at which his dog was making a dead point. On going up he found a reindeer staring at the dog, which he brought down with his two barrels. It had been wounded in the leg, and every man in the country round, who had ever handled a gun, was ready to swear that he had wounded it, and prove it by the shape of the bullet-hole.

I was joined at dinner by a student collecting plants, the Dovre Fjeld being a great haunt of botanists. He was proud of his collection, and insisted on unfolding it all to me, and pointing out with great pride a specimen of *sagina nivalis*, which he said was unique, unknown before in that part of the country. He seemed to wish to talk Latin, which we did for a little time very lamely, but the

conversation came to an absurd end by my asking him if he had seen the Aurora Borealis the night before. He was thoroughly puzzled, and said at last, "There is no such thing as aurora borealis in Norway. Perhaps you mean *gentiana nivalis*, or *ranunculus glacialis*. I have all the plants of Dovre Fjeld, and have never seen the plant you name." He was not half satisfied when I explained that I only meant the *nat-lys* (light at night), and seemed to think that I had been imposing on him.

The road to Jerkin passes between two lakes, on which I saw a good many Northern Divers. There are generally one or two of these birds on every lake in these fells, but they are very shy, and cannot be approached from the road. At Jerkin, the oldest station in Norway, I found a large and comfortable farm. Some tourists have described its situation as desolate in the extreme, and as bleak and as cold as Iceland. The climate varies a great deal in different years, so that I found it a cheerful place surrounded by banks of flowers, from which one might watch the haymakers and bask in the sun, while the very next year at the same season the road was blocked up with thick snow. There is a good deal

of game to be got quite close to the house, so that we fared sumptuously enough on woodcock, teal, and grouse, which my friend had shot. In winter and autumn the deer are very tame, and come quite near the house, but in the summer months they are very shy.

I took a gun and walked to Snæhattan while I was here, and watched a herd for a long time. They had taken up a position where the wind, a snow-slope, and a lake protected them on three sides, and on the fourth we could not get much nearer than a quarter of a mile without being seen, there being nothing but a flat of moss and mud between us. The only result of our watching them was to frighten them up Snæhattan. The mountain looked very grand from its foot, but we did not go up to the top, being about twelve miles from the house and the evening *dimming*, as the Norwegians have it. Near the house one morning I saw a splendid golden eagle wheeling round the little moor on which we were walking, and to which alone the fell-folk give the name *Dovre-fell*. On another occasion, while I was crouching there in some rushes with a friend, waiting for the return of some teal, a splendid white

falcon swooped down and stood quite close to us for a minute, and then went leisurely off, seeing our faces. But as a rule there are not many birds to be seen here except *ryper* and teal, and loons on the roadside meres.

Next day, after a pleasant walk down Foldalen to the house of a jager, who keeps good fox and wolf skins for sale, I took my leave of Madame Jerkin and her excellent hotel with much regret, and started back to Fogstuen. When I got there I found that my botanical friend had met some other students more dirty, if possible, than himself, and with wild shrieks was dragging one by his heels through the muck of the farmyard. The whole household was so taken up with this 'bear-fight' that no one had time to notice me, till I insisted on having a horse: at last the blear-eyed master came and gave me one, after trying in vain to get the *skyds* to make a complaint of me for over-driving. This place is one of the very few disagreeable stations in "the Uplands," and is a great contrast to its neighbours on each side, Dombaas and Jerkin. It was somewhere about here that King Hako of the Uplands, Haardrade's grand-

son, died. A ptarmigan got up near him, after which he rode all day trying to catch it, and died in the evening of his violent exertions !

The next station to Dombaas is Tofte, the ancient Thoptyn, or Toptheim. Mr. Tofte is a well-known character in Norway, and his claim to be descended from Harald Haarfagre, and, *par consequence*, from Odin, is allowed to be just. The family are accordingly immensely proud of the distinction, and take precedence of the other farmers in church, &c. ; nor will a Tofte ever marry out of his own family. The consequence of this is that they are losing their good constitution and becoming small. The eldest son of the present farmer is nearly a dwarf. I met Mr. Tofte at the door of his house and made a ceremonious bow "to the oldest family in Europe!" which took his fancy so much that he took me over his house and shewed me all his treasures. The rooms are very well furnished, and the shelves full of old carved tankards and other heirlooms ; one lacquer-work cabinet with gilt figures (dated 1649) is handsome. The dining-table is a slab of slate about eight feet long, on which King Oscar cut his name when he dined here on his way to be

crowned at Trondhjem. Tofte recounted his haughty message to the King, that he need not bring in his plate-chest, there being enough silver in Tofte-moen to serve a larger suite than his. Altogether, he seemed to be a little above the common run of farmers, and nervously anxious about his dignity. We talked about his brother's large farm on the hill, probably the same as the cottage mentioned in the Saga of his ancestor. When Harald Haar-fagre had conquered all Norway, and got rid of his nickname of *Lufa*, 'Shock-head' (he made a vow not to comb or cut his hair till he was king of the whole country), he went through all the Uplands inspecting his new domains. While he was keeping the Jule-feast at Tofte, a Finn called Swase came to the door and begged the King to come with him to the hut on the other side of the hill. When Harald got there he found a lovely girl (Swase's daughter), who gave him ale, and won his heart "as if a hot fire had gone through him." This Snæfrid became one of his many queens, and when she died Harald kept watch for three years at her bier, till one day when the courtiers moved the corpse, all her freshness fled, and the spell was

broken. So Harald drove away his father-in-law and his sons by Snæfrid for their magic. Swase is variously called in different manuscripts a Finn, and a Jotun, which shews that he was one of the aborigines, though probably not a Finn, the Norwegians never having admired the style of beauty of that people, and from the earliest times having called them Hellskins and 'fiends.' Probably the whole story was made up by a Skald to express in allegory the disgust felt by the people at the devotion of the king to his new queen, which lasted till her death.

It was always felt to be a difficulty in Haarfagre's history, that he is said to have met no opposition in crossing the easily-defended Dovre Fjeld. The later Sagas, and with them Snorro Sturlesson, merely say that he crossed the fjeld and went to fight at Trondhjem. But there is a tradition, which in the fourteenth century was considered to be very ancient, that Harald had lived when a boy in the house of King Dovre (?), who ruled that part and was one of the giants (aborigines); that Harald's men had once taken this king prisoner and treated him so well that he educated the boy for five years in perfect amity,

and afterwards helped him in his expedition over the mountains. It is not a very important matter after all, except to collectors of nearly extinct traditions. One of Tofte's near relations, Ole Haardenslad, was among the chief framers of the Constitution at Eidsvoldbakken in 1814. His picture is one of the six placed round the copy of this charter, which hangs in almost all the chief farm-houses.

The next house to Toftemoen is occupied by almost as well-known a personage as Tofte himself, of whom she is a good-humoured rival. It is old Sigrid of Brændhaugen, the mother of the landlord at Jerkin. On the royal progress over the fells the Queen presented her with an antique silver goblet, that Tofte, I suppose, might not have a monopoly of notice to make the neighbours jealous. She shewed me the cup with much pride, and read out the inscription, "Erindring fra Dronning Louise til Sigrid Jerkin [A remembrance from Queen Louise to Sigrid Jerkin], August 2, 1860." We spoke of Tofte, who she said was *alt-for-gammel*, 'of altogether too old a family,' and then expressed great wonder at the execution done by some Englishmen a few days ago among the *ryper*; they had killed ten brace, and

reported that there were a great many birds about the moor. A friend of mine in passing near this place saw several capercaillie (*tyūr*) run across the road; he went after them and was lucky enough to bag two or three. Brændhaugen is worth a visit for shooting purposes, the Rundane Mountains being a likely place for reindeer, and not very far from this station, where there is accommodation for a good large party.

CHAPTER XX.

GUDBRANDSDALEN.

AFTER drinking "Skaal" to Queen Louise out of her own beaker, I got my carriage under weigh and soon came to Dovre Church, a pretty little building with a spire covered with flags of clay slate; it is not, however, so picturesque as the charming church at Lesje.

The scenery of the pass into Lang-Gudbrandsdal is very grand. The road leads through pine woods for some time, and then through a regular gate between the mountains, which come down to the narrow river on both sides, so that there is absolutely no valley at all, and the road is cut out of the live rock. This pass is called Rusten. As it was getting dark I was obliged to push on to Moen, without stopping to find out old Hersir Gudbrand's tumulus, which exists somewhere near here at Hundthorp. Moen is a very poor place, but the people were very accommodating, and gave me supper at one in the morning—goat-cheese, an egg, and some porridge. The bill was as moderate as the accom-

modation, which is not always the case here; they charged 1s. for bed, supper, and breakfast. I had run short of tobacco, so the landlord gave me a cigar, and sold me a packet of the abominable tobacco, which only Norwegians relish, inscribed "Optimum petum *supter* solem." It could hardly be called the herb *Nicotian*, "divine, rare, super-excellent:" the low Latin *petum* was a name quite good enough for it. It is made entirely of the stalks of German tobacco pulverised, and is sold at the rate of eight-pence a pound.

On the first stage in the morning I passed the cleft of Kringelen, where the Scotch Colonel Sinclair and his regiment were massacred by an ambush of "the brave peasants of Vaage, Foen, and Lomb." Norwegians are never tired of telling how "Sir Sinkler sailed o'er the stormy sea," A.D. 1612, and will not believe that Englishmen are more or less indifferent to his fate and do not feel any particular sting on being reminded of the victory of the Norsemen. The boy muttered "Here fell Sinkler," and pointed with his whip to the monument commemorating this "Morat of Norway," with its oft-altered inscription, reciting how the peasants, among whom

“dwell honour, virtue, and all that earns praise, brake the Scotch to pieces like a potter’s vessel.” They were buried in this churchyard, and a good many trophies of the fight are still shewn in neighbouring houses. In this churchyard there is also a curious epitaph on the grave of a child, which was noticed some time ago in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*: it runs to this effect,—

“Death took away her who first gave me light,
And bore me away in the same year.
O well is me, I never knew the world,
Or my father and mother, but went straight to heaven.
I live among the angels there.”

Some of the bridges over the river are very frail, and raised high above the water. After Quam, however, there is no further need of them, the river having expanded into a large lake many miles long, on which, in old times, naval engagements took place. On its banks is Viig, a picturesque settlement: the house is on the same foundation as the one in which St. Olaf was born, and some of the rafters look as if they might be of any age. The cliffs are marked at short intervals with lines and inscriptions shewing the height of the great *floam*, or flood of the Logen, June 17th, 1860.

Before one comes to Elstad, the station on the hill, the road passes two lovely glens, out of which small rivers run into the swirling Logen, one of them making a fine fall over a weir of pine-logs at its junction. Opposite to the other is a cavern, out of which the Troms Elv, a subterranean torrent, flows; it is called (as is almost universal in such cases) the Devil's Hole. Elstad is, I think, the most beautifully situated house in Gudbrandsdal. A promontory of rocks juts out into the road, and on the brink of this is the station, to which a steep bye-road winds. It is enacted by the guide-books that a peculiar preparation of the huge lake trout caught here should be ordered and eaten by travellers. Accordingly I tried this *rak-öret*, and was somewhat disappointed at finding that it was only the national luxury of half-putrid fish soaked in salt, of which the Bergen peasants are the chief admirers. It is a dish which, unlike olives, does not improve on acquaintance.

There is not very much worth noticing in the remaining portion of Gudbrandsdal. The scenery is pretty, but tame, and probably owes its great reputation to its fertility, like the shores of Miösen:

besides, it is generally the first valley seen after leaving Christiania. The houses are very neatly painted in pale colours, pink, yellow, and brown, which must need renewing after every rainy season ; but "the peasant-lords of Gudbrand's dale" are rich enough to indulge a few caprices. I got to Lillehammer with no adventure except finding the whole company roaring drunk at one station, and having to harness the horse with the aid of the *skyds*, and drove up to Madame Ormsrud's hotel at a canter : on which rose remonstrances from the little girl who acted as 'skyds-boy,' pleading that a certain Mr. Hamar never forgave travellers who did not put up at his house ; as I found out afterwards to my cost.

Madame Ormsrud has a charming house, and sends up an excellent supper, with English novels to read afterwards, but unluckily keeps no post horses, which must be provided by the malicious Hamar. I was to have met the daily steamboat here, which would have taken me to Eidsvold Railway Station in time to catch the English boat at Christiania. As ill-luck would have it, the King had chartered both the Miösen boats for a review of Swedish and Norwegian

troops, so that I was thoroughly stranded. It was, however, just possible that by driving all day and night by the west shore of the lake, I might catch a train and be in time, so I ordered a horse and carriage to come and pick me up at Larsen's shop. This man is the only manufacturer of meerschaums in the country, and though they are of an awkward square shape, and of inferior quality, they are sometimes very beautifully carved. The price of the best is about a sovereign. Here a miserable horse was sent to carry me on my journey, with no 'skyds-boy,' and a broken carriage. No persuasion, no kicks or blows, would induce the animal to go up the hill. I tried to pull him up, which made him bite at me, and kick in every direction at once. After forcing the brute to go up at last, finding it impossible to make him move on, I abandoned the attempt, and lamented the small prospect of my ever getting to Christiania, when a ragged boy in the hedge called out, "Hollo, Englishman! you've got Hamar's mad horse because you did not go to his house." He then volunteered to take it back, with a note to the owner, if he might go with my carriage to the next station. The want of grammar in this my first

Norwegian letter was redeemed by the strength of the expressions gleaned from drivers in a rage with their cattle, and it concluded with a threat to make a formal complaint to "my friend the Inspector of Roads at Christiania." It produced the desired effect, and a very good horse was despatched instead of the mad one, with which we got off at a good pace.

The road along Miösen is very bad, the steamers having taken away all the traffic. I did not see a single English name in any of the road-books. The country is exceedingly rich, and the farms accordingly are large and elegantly furnished; though polished floors, looking-glasses, and sofas seemed out of place in stations on these break-neck roads.

I paid a visit to Hamar on my way, an old cathedral town, where Nicholas Breakspeare the English Pope once resided as Papal Legate, and did a great deal of good. He also founded the monastery at Lillehammer, which was burnt with the cathedral by the Swedes. Not far from here is Ringsaker, the site of one of St. Olaf's victories. Great Hamar is quite eclipsed now by

its thriving "Little" sister, which has absorbed all its trade. The towns got their name from *hamar*, 'a promontory:' Miösen means 'brimming banks,' and is a name given to several other lakes in Norway.

The people at one or two of the stations tried very hard to save their horses a journey in the night air by declaring that a steamer would call there early the next morning, but as their stories never agreed I luckily paid no attention to them, and continued a tiresome journey through the night. At one farm we had to catch and shoe the horse and then mend the cart, before I could go on. However, everything must end at last, and I got to Minne (the port) at the end of the lake as the sun rose with a fine effect on the shining level of the lake and the river at Minne, up which a boat took me to Eidsvold. Though every moment was of importance, the rowers with national nonchalance went first to a neighbouring hamlet on some private errand of their own. There was no train, and all my trouble seemed to have been taken in vain, and things looked very gloomy, especially as I had no more Norwegian money. However, the by-standers

said, "See Grimm, he can send you if he likes." Grimm was an honest English stoker, who enquired with much curiosity about the aspect of the country beyond Lillehammer, having been twelve years at one end of Miösen and never having been a day's trip to Gudbrandsdal at the other. He telegraphed to Christiania and got leave for me to come on in a luggage train, paying second-class fare, when with many waves of a coal-black hand he handed me over to Ole the guard. After forty miles of jolting, the train came to a stop somewhere near Christiania station, the guard sauntered off, and no more notice was taken. Luckily for me, I ran into the town just in time to jump on board the comfortable "Scandinavie" about two minutes before she started, very ragged and with no money at all. It would be needless to say anything of the comfort of the boat and the civility of the captain, and though we were unlucky enough to break our screw and be delayed for a day or two at Christiansand, we arrived at Hull well pleased with our five days' voyage.

Since that time I have again been up and down the Miösen in the "Skibladner" (so called from

Odin's magical pocket ship), and the Færdesmand, but the boats are unpleasant, especially for ladies, who find them dirty, and do not appreciate the invariable pike (*gedde*) for dinner, for which the lake is as renowned as for its fresh-water-herrings and *Salmo ferox*.

CHAPTER XXI.

FILLE FJELD TO GJÖVIK ON MIÖSEN.

ON my second visit to Nystuen I did not try the fjeld, but drove through Land and Valdres to catch the boat at Gjövik. This route is very pleasant, and perfectly comfortable for ladies; the stations are for the most part large and clean, and the scenery very fine. A steep descent leads to Skogstad, a poor place, where we found a little crowd assembled with trinkets for sale, having announced to the driver of a preceding carriage, that we wanted to buy one of their large brass purses. Accordingly a *'pung'* of brass and leather with two locks awaited our approach and was sold, though its owner was not at home. We were assured that the price we gave for it would quite reconcile the good man to his loss. Most of the other ornaments were trumpery, such as garnet rings, and brooches of rock crystal and silver, and were glad to get away from the jabbering crew offering us all their worldly wealth at an "alarming sacrifice."

It is by all means advisable to take horses here for two stages at a slightly advanced rate, and

thereby to avoid a disgusting station full of vermin, which we were thankful to pass at a considerable distance. We soon got to Little Miösen Lake, along which the road winds for fourteen miles through a succession of charming views. On the opposite side are many waterfalls and cascades, and deep clefts shadowed over with pine-trees. Great Miösen can stand no comparison at all to this lovely lake. The road till about two years ago went over Hugakollen, a mountain 4,200 ft. high, which overhangs the water precipitously. It was the most dangerous place in Norway, as my last extract from my old authority Pontoppidan will shew:—"The road on the side of the high steep mountain is in some parts as confined as the narrowest path, and if two travellers in the night should chance to meet in the narrow part, it seems to me, as it does to others whom I have asked, that they must stop short, unable to pass each other or to turn their horses, or even to alight. The only resource is that one of them must endeavour to cling to some corner of the cliff or be drawn up by a rope (if help be at hand), and then to throw his horse headlong into the lake in order to make room for the other to pass!"

The diaries of later travellers shew that the Bishop hardly exaggerated the danger of this unpleasant bit of road. A better one, however, has now been blasted and tunnelled out of the rock, and in some parts palisaded or garnished with huge blocks of stone on the lake side. It still overhangs very deep water, and a serious accident might occur if the *skyds* and horses were unsteady. Passing through a wooden covered bridge, which serves to prop up an overhanging rock, we came on a fine view at the end of a lake. A gray moss-covered hill rises from the water with great boldness of outline, and beneath it, at no great height above the lake, hung a delicate rainbow, which framed our view of the Lærøls-Foss, a fine waterfall on the other side of the road. This fall is perhaps best seen from the shop at Slidre, which we were now approaching. The driver had heard of the legend that there are codfish in this fresh-water lake, and fully believed in subterranean communication with some fjord, which seems impossible. The question is not worth discussing till one of the codfish is produced.

From Oiloe, where the family are very courteous and obliging, we drove to Stee, a place favourably

known for an abundance of game, which has probably induced the resident *jager*, Skjefte, to put out an absurd advertisement, offering his services for more than twice the usual rate of pay. He is to be carefully avoided, unless he will take three marks *per diem* and only what is not wanted of the birds. There is a bear-hunter living near the roadside, who has a good many skins of various sorts for sale at English prices. On the whole, I think that the men of Valders have been somewhat corrupted by the stream of travellers.

Any one who cares about obscure history might identify any number of places in this district which once were famous in the wars of King Swerre, the bold king whose flight by the Næro-dal, and so to the Rundals River and the Red Fells to Hallingdal, I have already mentioned. In some parts of his journey a road of planks had to be clamped to the rocks for his horses to pass over, and it is said that some of these iron bolts still remain in their places to mark his path. The hostile army marched up Valders and over the Fille Fjeld by the ordinary road in chase of him, but lost him near Bolstadören.

Another instance of Swerre's boldness was his

taking the crown in direct opposition to the Pope and the Bishop of Trondhjem. Eventually he got the better of his enemies with his faithful army of "Birchbark legs," having fought at almost every place between Lillehammer and Bergen, and killed fifteen petty kings in as many naval battles (according to Roger Hoveden). His history deserves translation quite as much as those of the earlier heroes of the *Heimskringla*. That he was in all respects early recognised as King of Norway is shewn by the treaties (given in Rymer) between him and the King of Scotland about the treatment of shipwrecked sailors. That he was generous his gifts of church plate and decorations to the cathedral at Thorshaven in the Faroe Islands shew, and the large silver vessel used in the Communion at Bergen, which was called "Swerre's Bowl." Inasmuch, however, as he had deposed Magnus, the favourite of the Pope, his character has been dutifully blackened by most of his ecclesiastical biographers*. He

* The Scalds in each army were inspired by even greater hate to the other side than the *odium theologium*. They parodied each other's songs, reading *nithing*, 'infamous,' 'coward,' for *milling*, 'magnificent,' and replacing conventional titles of respect by various

seems, indeed, to have been somewhat severe on their order. Eustace the Archbishop having fled to England and left an excommunication behind him, Reginald, an English bishop of Stavanger, refused to come to the coronation. The King tied him to a rock till the rising tide reached his mouth, when he was glad enough to be unbound and to take part in the ceremony.

Another English annalist, Gulielmus Newbri-gensis, has drawn his biography in dark colours : "That most infamous priest, Swerre, was chosen as a vessel by the devil to fill with tyranny. This villain was once so hard pressed by the king's troops that he had to hide under a heap of dead ; but soon in his turn drove Magnus back. The King at last had recourse to a witch, who promised to drown his foes ; but the devil, helping his own as usual, forced the witch to swallow up the wrong army in her magical wave, and so the priest became king of unsavoury epithets. The army of Magnus was nicknamed "the Heklungs," or Hekla-men. They had once caught a beggar woman whose cloak (*hekla*) was fairly lined with money. They killed her and shared the cloak, whence their name. The word also points to the origin of the name Mount Hecla in Iceland. It is nothing more than *the cloak* (of snow).

Norway." It is easy to trace the influence of the exiled Archbishop of Trondhjem in this wonderful narrative of the life of Swerre, "The great king, fierce as a lion, gentle as a lamb^b," who was certainly one of the best that Norway ever owned^c. Swerre is said by Saxo the Grammarian to have been the son of a smith in Faroe, and to have been ordained, but finding an army without a leader in Norway, to have come forward and claimed to be the son of Harold Gille the Irishman, who had ruled a great part of the country.

It is better not to stop at Reien, the regular station, but to drive along the shore of the Strand Fjord, deep set in rocks, to Fagernæs (about four miles), a comfortable inn and shop kept by Mr. Stuve, who can accommodate about a dozen people very comfortably. The house is new and very clean, and we spent two or three pleasant days there in a large party. There is a waterfall near the house, and another by the roadside nearer to Reien,

^b The motto on this king's great seal.

^c Elenchlagel, in a poem addressed to Frederick VI. of Denmark and Norway, held him up as an example of what a king should be.

which are both worth sketching. The stores are kept in a large cellar, which we explored one evening, and were surprised to find what abundance of good things Mr. Stuve had collected. Excellent champagne and claret, sardines, potted meats, Reading biscuits, and all sorts of Fortnum-and-Mason-ware. One lady, candle in hand, stooped into a large open cask to see what it held; the attending boy, with a broad grin, said, "*Only gunpowder!*" which moderated our zeal for closer examination. Another of the party, tasting the groceries in a dark corner, got his mouth filled with fuller's earth, to his disgust. We finally ascended to the upper air with all sorts of treasures for our journey, and drank our host's health in his champagne, which he most honestly continued to assure us was "not *Veuve Clicquot*, but just as good." I was told that there was not much game on the moor; if there was, Fagernæs would be a delightful place for a stay of a week or two. On the steep road which leads to Frydenlund one gets a very fine view of the whole valley, and looks down upon the above-mentioned waterfall of the Beina River. The mountain which we are now crossing is at least four thousand

feet high. A good road hanging over the brink of deep ravines trends down to Gravidalen, a poor place, containing nothing worth remembering. The darkness prevented our appreciating the waterfall by the bridge, near Tomlevold, which is said to be fine.

Tomlevold is a large farm containing some prettily furnished rooms for travellers, and the people are tolerably attentive, though at first we could not induce the old lady, smoking her pipe at the door, to do much for us. Her daughter, however, made some excellent *flödegröd* for supper. This dish is one of the chief boasts of Norwegian country-folk, and I have heard them say that if English ladies only knew how good it was, they would not so much mind leaving their cakes and sugar in England. In fact, *flödegröd*, or, as the rustics miscall it, *fløitagroit*, is the stock weapon with which to parry attacks on the poverty of fare in Norway which English people have been fond of making. Many of the farmers are well-read in their Sagas, and can tell how such reports were spread in the English Court as long ago as the time of Henry III. The Cardinal sent from Rome to consecrate the Norwegian king went first to London, and was

entertained with accounts of "the beast-like inhabitants" of the country he was to visit. Master William the Legate sailed up Bergen Bay most sorrowfully we are told, till King Hako came to meet him in a gilded ship, with all his clergy magnificently arrayed. It was Sunday, the eve or 'wake' of St. Olaf's feast, and therefore appropriate for a banquet at the Konungs - Gaard; after supper the Cardinal made a speech, in which he said,—
"There were those in England who would have stayed me from coming hither, saying that I should meet few people and those clad like wild animals, but I see here a vast multitude of natives and strangers, and ships, so many as I have never before seen in one haven. They told me that I should get little bread or 'food-ware,' and that very bad, that I should drink nought but sour whey and water, but I trow here is an overflow of good things, so that both house and ship are full. So I say, God save the King and Queen, the bishops and learned elerks, and also the lay people of this land^d."

Innocent's legate must have met with some of

^d Saga of Hakon Hakonson.

the sweet batter-pudding, I suspect, to have got up all this enthusiasm. There is no mention of anything else richer than stockfish or dried meat in the Sagas, except at Yule-tide, when slaughter-day came round.

Between Tomlevold and Mustad the road is not so beautiful; the country is more level and better cultivated, so that the stations are as well built and furnished as in Hedemark, by Miösen. Murray seems to think that bears are found about here, but the people do not confirm it; at Sköien, the lady-like hostess, who brought in the currant tart and cream of a most civilized lunch, said that English gentlemen had found but little game of any kind about there. At Mustad, however, there is a legend of a bear hunt, which may have expanded into a report of their present abundance. Valdres, says the story, was thickly populated and studded with many churches when the Black Death came to Norway in a deserted English ship, A.D. 1349. The pestilence made a wilderness of the province, which has never recovered its former riches^e. Centuries afterwards

^e This is not so marvellous when we consider that the same disease blotted out altogether the flourishing Norwegian colony of Greenland.

a hunter was tracking a bear through a thick forest, and found that its den was in a ruined chapel. He stood in the doorway and killed his bear, and going home proclaimed his discovery of a chapel, and in all probability of good land round or near it. The result of all this was the second clearing of the thickets and the foundation of Mustad on the site of the bear's den.

Mustad is a large house built of wood, but carefully polished, which gave the sitting-room a very grand air. The old gentleman indeed said that it was his "festivity room," and it was better than anything which we had yet seen. We slept here, and the next morning drove into Gjøvik in pouring rain. This is one of the little towns which are springing up round Miösen Lake; it receives all the trade of Land and Valdres, and is not far from Lillehammer at the mouth of Gudbrandsdal, so that it has some chance of escaping from its present insignificance. If travellers do not wish to return by Miösen, they should not come by the cross-road, which I have described, but stop at Tomlevold and steam down the Rands Fjord to Hönefoss, and so home by Ringeriget. A well-known Runic obelisk is

to be seen about seven miles from Gjøvik, on which are carved the figures of a fox, an eagle, and four horses. The inscription has been variously interpreted, but it does not appear to give more than the names of the persons buried there. The meaning of the fox, eagle, and horses is quite unknown.

Gjøvik has no attraction for English visitors, being at the present time only a smaller copy of its neighbour Lillehammer; it is, however, said that it is rapidly increasing in importance, and is destined to be the mart of all the country lying between Miösen Lake and the Fille Fjeld.

A short journey by boat and rail took us back to Christiania, where we started for Hamburg by the Kiel steamer, even more pleased with a second summer among the fells than with the first, and, like all other visitors to "Gamle Norge," wishing to return at the first convenient opportunity.

